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GREAT SHORT NOVELS OF THE WORLD

A COLLECTION
OF COMPLETE TALES CHOSEN
FROM THE LITERATURES OF
ALL PERIODS AND COUNTRIES

BY

BARRETT H. CLARK

SEMPER PARATVS

ROBERT M. McBRIDE & COMPANY
NEW YORK MCMXXVII
1927

WITHDRAWN
Pierce Library
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1410 L Avenue
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FIRST PUBLISHED, OCTOBER, 1927

GREAT SHORT NOVELS OF THE WORLD

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY THE PLIMPTON PRESS · NORWOOD · MASSACHUSETTS

A Note for Critics

THE FEW lines that follow are not for the general reader. He will open this book for the sake of the stories, without bothering to discover the reasons why I put in this one instead of that, or to understand the difficulties and embarrassments that beset me throughout my work. He will also not care very greatly why I choose to call the book *Great Short Novels,* rather than *Great Long Short Stories,* or *Great Novelettes*. And he will be quite right. These matters are not of vast importance.

The volume comprises as many good tales of a certain kind, or certain kinds, as I could find and use. For convenience' sake, and in order to satisfy a pardonable instinct for order which is easier to describe than to explain, I have tried to select stories that fall, more or less, into a very general category. This I have rather arbitrarily called the "short novel." I am opposed to hard-and-fast methods of classification in matters of art, and I can see no use in trying to define once and for all any esthetic manifestation as to its content or form. Yet for purposes of convenience I find it necessary in compiling a volume like *Great Short Stories of the World* or the present companion collection, to adopt my own standards of measurement and appraisal. In a word, it is my purpose to bring together within a single volume a number of prose narratives of a somewhat longer and more elaborate character than the so-called short stories that were included in the earlier volume.

The short novels in this collection are so designated not because they are for the most part longer than the average "short story" and shorter than the average novel, but because they are *usually* concerned with the development of character, and therefore are akin to the novel, which is not an anecdote or episode, but a series of scenes and episodes combined and expanded in order to lay bare the hearts and minds of human beings.

As a general rule (and here I am dealing, unacademically, in generalities), your writer of short stories like Maupassant or O. Henry, is intent upon describing a single crisis, a stirring or surprising situ-

ation which at most suggests a larger and more developed situation, with human beings as actors in it; whereas the novelist is generally concerned with showing us many situations, and characters more or less carefully developed.

The "short novel" — or long short story, or *nouvelle,* or *Erzählung,* or whatever you may care to call it — is a kind of novel in embryo, a miniature novel. *Carmen* is, I think, a very good example of what I mean, and so is *Rip Van Winkle,* the shortest in my book.

I am well aware that you to whom I address this note will have no difficulty in quarrelling with my choice of material; it is easy to ask why I took this story and not that; and I know you will occasionally disagree with my admittedly arbitrary method of classification.

However, it is not my intention to erect any elaborate defence against possible adverse criticism, except on one point. Let me explain briefly the difficulties I have encountered in trying to secure the rights from authors, agents, publishers — and sometimes from all three combined — to reprint copyright material. While nearly everyone controlling such material has made it possible for me to print what I liked on reasonable terms, I must in justice to myself and my publishers state that I have been unable to reprint certain stories that I should have liked to put into this volume. I should, for instance, have liked to put in tales by Conrad, Kipling, and Edith Wharton; certain standard translations from the classics; and a number of new translations of old stories. Unfortunately, I was not able to convince those who held the rights that the sums I could offer were a reasonable compensation for any loss that might be incurred.

On the other hand, I have been especially fortunate in enlisting the services of a number of scholars and specialists, who have made new translations for me, and in some instances made invaluable suggestions. Thus I was able to offer English readers tales that have never before been translated: such are the examples by Dandin, Gide, Reymont, Aho, Gjalski, and Bang.

To the authors, agents, publishers, translators, and others who have helped me, I wish to express my deepest gratitude. Particular mention is made throughout the book to these persons. But I must here refer more specifically to the following, whose advice and encouragement have been of inestimable value to me. First to my wife, Cecile S. Clark, upon whom the burden of reading hundreds of volumes has fallen, and whose modesty forbade my putting her name as co-editor on the title-page. Professor George R. Noyes has supplied

me with many facts about Jugoslav and Polish fiction that would otherwise have escaped me; Professor Frank W. Chandler has rendered help of various kinds; while Professor Ryder was kind enough to allow me to use a new translation in this volume before it appeared in a book of his own.

Barrett H. Clark

Publisher's Note

EVERY care has been taken to discover the owners of all copyright stories, but if any necessary acknowledgments have been omitted, or any stories included without the permission, we trust the copyright-holders will accept our apologies.

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GREAT
SHORT NOVELS
OF THE WORLD

GREAT SHORT NOVELS OF THE WORLD

Biblical Literature

INTRODUCTION

THE literature of the ancient Hebrews is particularly rich and varied. The canonical *Old Testament* of the *Bible*, and the writings now included in the non-canonical *Apocrypha*, are full of stirring accounts of love and adventure.

The literary history of the Hebrew people begins about the time of their going into the land of Canaan, somewhere in the Eighth Century before the Christian era. Most of the legends and historical chronicles were recorded at a rather later date, in particular the more finished literary stories like *Ruth*, *Esther*, and *Judith*. The *Old Testament* and *Apocrypha* stories were written originally for the purpose of recording the history of the Hebrews, glorifying the exploits of their heroes, and exhorting them to cling to their religion and traditions. The earlier historical and legendary narratives are naturally based to a certain extent upon Assyrian and Babylonian tales and myths, but in later times and in the hands of more skilful writers, they were developed into highly imaginative works of art.

The tales of the *New Testament* are rather less epic in conception and far less extensive than those I have just referred to. The parables of Jesus — incidents for the most part — are among the great short stories of all time. But the Gospels, quite aside from their historical and theological significance, are actually short novels. In view of their easy accessibility to the reading public, I have not thought it necessary to include one of them here. I have therefore chosen one of the less well-known narratives from the *Apocrypha*.

JUDITH

(From *The Apocrypha*

Anonymous: 4th–2nd Century, B.C.?)

THE story of *Judith* is the oldest narrative in this volume. Very little is known of its composition, and nothing of its author. It was originally written in Hebrew, though the text itself is no longer in existence. One authority ascribes it to the time of Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.). Another declares that it may have been written "to inflame patriotic feeling at the time of some invasion."

The Apocrypha, in which the story is found, is a collection of old Hebrew writings which have been rejected from the books of the *Old* and *New Testaments*.

The text here used is reprinted, with modernised spelling and punctuation, from *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old Testament and the New, Newly Translated out of the Original Tongues*.... [*London*] 1701.

JUDITH

IN THE twelfth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who reigned in Ninevah, the great city; in the days of Arphaxad, which reigned over Medes in Ecbatana, and built in Ecbatana walls round about of stones hewn three cubits broad and six cubits long, and made the height of the wall seventy cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits: and set the towers thereof upon the gates of it, an hundred cubits high, and the breadth thereof in the foundation threescore cubits: and he made the gates thereof, even gates that were raised to the height of seventy cubits, and the breadth of them was forty cubits, for the going forth of his mighty armies, and for the setting in array of his footmen: even in those days king Nebuchadnezzar made war with king Arphaxad in the great plain, which is the plain in the borders of Ragau. And there came unto him all they that dwelt in the hill country, and all that dwelt by Euphrates, and Tigris, and Hydaspes, and the plain of Arioch the king of the Elymeans, and very many nations of the sons of Chelod, assembled themselves to the battle.

Then Nebuchadnezzar king of the Assyrians sent unto all that dwelt in Persia, and to all that dwelt westward, and to those that dwelt in Cilicia, and Damascus, and Libanus, and Antilibanus, and to all that dwelt upon the sea coast, and to those among the nations that were of Carmel, and

Gilead, and the higher Galilee, and the great plain of Esdraelon, and to all that were in Samaria and the cities thereof, and beyond Jordan unto Jerusalem, and Betane, and Chellus, and Kadesh, and the river of Egypt, and Taphnes, and Rameses, and all the land of Goshen, until ye come beyond Tanis and Memphis, and to all the inhabitants of Egypt, until ye come to the borders of Ethiopia. But all the inhabitants of the land made light of the commandment of Nebuchadnezzar king of the Assyrians, neither went they with him to the battle; for they were not afraid of him: yea, he was before them as one man, and they sent away his ambassadors from them without effect, and with disgrace. Therefore Nebuchadnezzar was very angry with all this country, and sware by his throne and kingdom that he would surely be avenged upon all those coasts of Cilicia, and Damascus, and Syria, and that he would slay with the sword all the inhabitants of the land of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and all Judea, and all that were in Egypt, till ye come to the borders of the two seas. Then he marched in battle array with his power against king Arphaxad in the seventeenth year, and he prevailed in his battle: for he overthrew all the power of Arphaxad, and all his horsemen, and all his chariots, and became lord of his cities, and came unto Ecbatana, and took the towers, and spoiled the streets thereof, and turned the beauty thereof into shame. He took also Arphaxad in the mountains of Ragau, and smote him through with his darts, and destroyed him utterly that day. So he returned afterward to Ninevah, both he and all his company of sundry nations, being a very great multitude of men of war, and there he took his ease, and banqueted, both he and his army, an hundred and twenty days.

And in the eighteenth year, the two and twentieth day of the first month, there was talk in the house of Nebuchadnezzar king of the Assyrians, that he should, as he said, avenge himself on all the earth. So he called unto him all his officers, and all his nobles, and communicated with them his secret counsel, and concluded the afflicting of the whole earth out of his own mouth. Then they decreed to destroy all flesh, that did not obey the commandment of his mouth. And when he had ended his counsel, Nebuchadnezzar king of the Assyrians called Holofernes the chief captain of his army, which was next unto him, and said unto him:

"Thus saith the great king, the lord of the whole earth, Behold, thou shalt go forth from my presence, and take with thee men that trust in their own strength, of footmen an hundred and twenty thousand; and the number of horses with their riders twelve thousand. And thou shalt go against all the west country, because they disobeyed my commandment. And thou shalt declare unto them that they prepare for me earth and water: for I will go forth in my wrath against them, and will cover the whole face of the earth with the feet of mine army, and I will give them for a spoil unto them: so that their slain shall fill their valleys and brooks,

and the river shall be filled with their dead, till it overflow: and I will lead them captives to the utmost parts of all the earth. Thou therefore shalt go forth, and take beforehand for me all their coasts: and if they will yield themselves unto thee, thou shalt reserve them for me till the day of their punishment. But concerning them that rebel, let not thine eye spare them; but put them to the slaughter, and spoil them wheresoever thou goest. For as I live, and by the power of my kingdom, whatsoever I have spoken, that will I do by mine hand. And take thou heed that thou transgress none of the commandments of thy lord, but accomplish them fully, as I have commanded thee, and defer not to do them."

Then Holofernes went forth from the presence of his lord, and called all the governors and captains, and the officers of the army of Assur; and he mustered the chosen men for the battle, as his lord had commanded him, unto an hundred and twenty thousand, and twelve thousand archers on horseback; and he ranged them, as a great army is ordered for the war. And he took camels and asses for their baggage, a very great number; and sheep and oxen and goats without number for their provision: and plenty of victual for every man of the army, and very much gold and silver out of the king's house. Then he went forth and all his power to go before king Nebuchadnezzar in the voyage, and to cover all the face of the earth westward with their chariots, and horsemen, and their chosen footmen. A great number also of sundry countries came with them like locusts, and like the sand of the earth: for the multitude was without number.

And they went forth of Ninevah three days' journey toward the plain of Bectileth, and pitched from Bectileth near the mountain which is at the left hand of the upper Cilicia. Then he took all his army, his footmen, and horsemen, and chariots, and went from thence into the hill country; and destroyed Phud and Lud, and spoiled all the children of Rasses, and the children of Ismael, which were toward the wilderness at the south of the land of the Chellians. Then he went over Euphrates, and went through Mesopotamia, and destroyed all the high cities that were upon the river Arbonai, till ye come to the sea. And he took the borders of Cilicia, and killed all that resisted him, and came to the borders of Japheth, which were toward the south, over against Arabia. He compassed also all the children of Midian, and burnt up their tents, and spoiled their sheepcotes. Then he went down into the plain of Damascus in the time of wheat harvest, and burnt up all their fields, and destroyed their flocks and herds, also he spoiled their cities, and utterly wasted their countries, and smote all their young men with the edge of the sword. Therefore the fear and dread of him fell upon all the inhabitants of the sea coasts, which were in Sidon and Tyre, and them that dwelt in Sur and Ocina, and all that dwelt in Jemnaan; and they that dwelt in Azotus and Ascalon feared him greatly.

So they sent ambassadors unto him to treat of peace, saying:—"Be-

hold, we the servants of Nebuchadnezzar the great king lie before thee; use us as shall be good in thy sight. Behold, our houses, and all our places, and all our fields of wheat, and flocks, and herds, and all the lodges of our tents, lie before thy face; use them as it pleaseth thee. Behold, even our cities and the inhabitants thereof are thy servants; come and deal with them as seemeth good unto thee." So the men came to Holofernes, and declared unto him after this manner.

Then came he down toward the sea coast, both he and his army, and set garrisons in the high cities, and took out of them chosen men for aid. So they and all the country round about received them with garlands, with dances, and with timbrels. Yet he did cast down their frontiers, and cut down their groves: for he had decreed to destroy all the gods of the land, that all nations should worship Nebuchadnezzar only, and that all tongues and tribes should call upon him as god. Also he came over against Esdraelon near unto Judea, over against the great strait of Judea. And he pitched between Geba and Scythopolis, and there he tarried a whole month, that he might gather together all the baggage of his host.

Now the children of Israel, that dwelt in Judea, heard all that Holofernes the chief captain of Nebuchadnezzar king of the Assyrians had done to the nations, and after what manner he had spoiled all their temples, and brought them to nought. Therefore they were exceedingly afraid of him, and were troubled for Jerusalem, and for the temple of the Lord their God: for they were newly returned from the captivity, and all the people of Judea were lately gathered together: and the vessels, and the altar, and the house, were sanctified after the profanation. Therefore they sent into all the coasts of Samaria, and the villages, and to Bethoron, and Belmen, and Jericho, and to Choba, and Esora, and to the valley of Salem: and possessed themselves beforehand of all the tops of the high mountains, and fortified the villages that were in them, and laid up victuals for the provision of war: for their fields were of late reaped. Also Joakim the high priest, which was in those days in Jerusalem, wrote to them that dwelt in Bethulia, and Betomestham, which is over against Esdraelon toward the open country, near to Dothaim, charging them to keep the passages of the hill country: for by them there was an entrance into Judea, and it was easy to stop them that would come up, because the passage was strait, for two men at the most. And the children of Israel did as Joakim the high priest had commanded them, with the ancients of all the people of Israel, which dwelt at Jerusalem.

Then every man of Israel cried to God with great fervency, and with great vehemency did they humble their souls: both they, and their wives, and their children, and their cattle, and every stranger and hireling, and their servants bought with money, put sackcloth upon their loins. Thus every man and woman, and the little children, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, fell before the temple, and cast ashes upon their heads, and

spread out their sackcloth before the face of the Lord: also they put sackcloth about the altar, and cried to the God of Israel all with one consent earnestly, that He would not give their children for a prey, and their wives for a spoil, and the cities of their inheritance to destruction, and the sanctuary to profanation and reproach, and for the nations to rejoice at. So God heard their prayers, and looked upon their afflictions: for the people fasted many days in all Judea and Jerusalem before the sanctuary of the Lord Almighty. And Joakim the high priest, and all the priests that stood before the Lord, and they which ministered unto the Lord, had their loins girt with sackcloth, and offered the daily burnt offerings, with the vows and free gifts of the people, and had ashes on their mitres, and cried unto the Lord with all their power, that He would look upon all the house of Israel graciously.

Then was it declared to Holofernes, the chief captain of the army of Assur, that the children of Israel had prepared for war, and had shut up the passages of the hill country, and had fortified all the tops of the high hills, and had laid impediments in the champaign countries: wherewith he was very angry, and called all the princes of Moab, and the captains of Ammon, and all the governors of the sea coast, and he said unto them: "Tell me now, ye sons of Canaan, who this people is, that dwelleth in the hill country, and what are the cities that they inhabit, and what is the multitude of their army, and wherein is their power and strength, and what king is set over them, or captain of their army; and why have they determined not to come and meet me, more than all the inhabitants of the west."

Then said Achior, the captain of all the sons of Ammon: "Let my lord now hear a word from the mouth of thy servant, and I will declare unto thee the truth concerning this people, which dwelleth near thee, and inhabiteth the hill countries: and there shall no lie come out of the mouth of thy servant. This people are descended of the Chaldeans: and they sojourned heretofore in Mesopotamia, because they would not follow the gods of their fathers, which were in the land of Chaldea. For they left the way of their ancestors, and worshipped the God of heaven, the God whom they knew: so they cast them out from the face of their gods, and they fled into Mesopotamia, and sojourned there many days. Then their God commanded them to depart from the place where they sojourned, and to go into the land of Canaan: where they dwelt, and were increased with gold and silver, and with very much cattle. But when a famine covered all the land of Canaan, they went down into Egypt, and sojourned there, while they were nourished, and became there a great multitude, so that one could not number their nation. Therefore the king of Egypt rose up against them, and dealt subtilly with them, and brought them low with labouring in brick, and made them slaves. Then they cried unto their God, and He smote all the land of Egypt with incurable plagues: so the

Egyptians cast them out of their sight. And God dried the Red Sea before them, and brought them to mount Sinai, and Kadesh-Barnea, and cast forth all that dwelt in the wilderness. So they dwelt in the land of the Amorites, and they destroyed by their strength all them of Heshbon, and passing over Jordan they possessed all the hill country. And they cast forth before them the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Shechemite, and all the Girgashites, and they dwelt in that country many days. And whilst they sinned not before their God, they prospered, because the God that hateth iniquity was with them. But when they departed from the way which He appointed them, they were destroyed in many battles very sore, and were led captives into a land that was not theirs, and the temple of their God was cast to the ground, and their cities were taken by the enemies. But now are they returned to their God, and are come up from the places where they were scattered, and have possessed Jerusalem, where their sanctuary is, and are seated in the hill country; for it was desolate. Now therefore, my lord and governor, if there be any error in this people, and they sin against their God, let us consider that this shall be their ruin, and let us go up, and we shall overcome them. But if there be no iniquity in their nation, let my lord now pass by, lest their Lord defend them, and their God be for them, and we become a reproach before all the world."

And when Achior had finished these sayings, all the people standing round about the tent murmured, and the chief men of Holofernes, and all that dwelt by the sea side, and Moab, spake that he should kill him. "For," say they, "we will not be afraid of the face of the children of Israel: for, lo, it is a people that have no strength nor power for a strong battle. Now therefore, lord Holofernes, we will go up, and they shall be a prey to be devoured of all thine army."

And when the tumult of men that were about the council was ceased, Holofernes the chief captain of the army of Assur said unto Achior and all the Moabites before all the company of other nations: "And who art thou, Achior, and the hirelings of Ephraim, that thou hast prophesied among us as to-day, and hast said, that we should not make war with the people of Israel, because their God will defend them? and who is God but Nebuchadnezzar? He will send his power, and will destroy them from the face of the earth, and their God shall not deliver them: but we his servants will destroy them as one man; for they are not able to sustain the power of our horses. For with them we will tread them under foot, and their mountains shall be drunken with their blood, and their fields shall be filled with their dead bodies, and their footsteps shall not be able to stand before us, for they shall utterly perish, saith king Nebuchadnezzar, lord of all the earth: for he said, None of my words shall be in vain. And thou, Achior, an hireling of Ammon, which hast spoken these words in the day of thine iniquity, shalt see my face no more from this day, until I take

vengeance of this nation that came out of Egypt. And then shall the sword of mine army, and the multitude of them that serve me, pass through thy sides, and thou shalt fall among their slain, when I return. Now therefore my servants shall bring thee back into the hill country, and shall set thee in one of the cities of the passages: and thou shalt not perish, till thou be destroyed with them. And if thou persuade thyself in thy mind that they shall not be taken, let not thy countenance fall: I have spoken it, and none of my words shall be in vain."

Then Holofernes commanded his servants, that waited in his tent, to take Achior, and bring him to Bethulia, and deliver him into the hands of the children of Israel. So his servants took him, and brought him out of the camp into the plain, and they went from the midst of the plain into the hill country, and came unto the fountains that were under Bethulia. And when the men of the city saw them, they took up their weapons, and went out of the city to the top of the hill: and every man that used a sling kept them from coming up by casting of stones against them. Nevertheless having gotten privily under the hill, they bound Achior, and cast him down, and left him at the foot of the hill, and returned to their lord. But the Israelites descended from their city, and came unto him, and loosed him, and brought him into Bethulia, and presented him to the governors of the city: which were in those days Ozias the son of Micha, of the tribe of Simeon, and Chabris the son of Gothoniel, and Charmis the son of Melchiel. And they called together all the ancients of the city, and all their youth ran together, and their women, to the assembly, and they set Achior in the midst of all their people. Then Ozias asked him of that which was done. And he answered and declared unto them the words of the council of Holofernes, and all the words that he had spoken in the midst of the princes of Assur, and whatsoever Holofernes had spoken proudly against the house of Israel. Then the people fell down and worshipped God, and cried unto God, saying: "O Lord God of heaven, behold their pride, and pity the low estate of our nation, and look upon the face of those that are sanctified unto Thee this day." Then they comforted Achior, and praised him greatly. And Ozias took him out of the assembly unto his house, and made a feast to the elders; and they called on the God of Israel all that night for help.

The next day Holofernes commanded all his army, and all his people which were come to take his part, that they should remove their camp against Bethulia, to take aforehand the ascents of the hill country, and to make war against the children of Israel. Then their strong men removed their camps in that day, and the army of the men of war was an hundred and seventy thousand footmen, and twelve thousand horsemen, beside the baggage, and other men that were afoot among them, a very great multitude. And they camped in the valley near unto Bethulia, by the fountain, and they spread themselves in breadth over Dothaim even

to Belmain, and in length from Bethulia unto Cyamon, which is over against Esdraelon. Now the children of Israel, when they saw the multitude of them, were greatly troubled, and said every one to his neighbor: "Now will these men lick up the face of the earth; for neither the high mountains, nor the valleys, nor the hills, are able to bear their weight." Then every man took up his weapons of war, and when they had kindled fires upon their towers, they remained and watched all that night.

But in the second day Holofernes brought forth all his horsemen in the sight of the children of Israel which were in Bethulia, and viewed the passages up to the city, and came to the fountains of their waters, and took them, and set garrisons of men of war over them, and he himself removed toward his people. Then came unto him all the chief of the children of Esau, and all the governors of the people of Moab, and the captains of the sea coast, and said: "Let our lord now hear a word, that there be not an overthrow in thine army. For this people of the children of Israel do not trust in their spears, but in the height of the mountains wherein they dwell, because it is not easy to come up to the tops of their mountains. Now therefore, my lord, fight not against them in battle array, and there shall not so much as one man of thy people perish. Remain in thy camp, and keep all the men of thine army, and let thy servants get into their hands the fountain of water, which issueth forth of the foot of the mountain: for all the inhabitants of Bethulia have their water thence; so shall thirst kill them, and they shall give up their city, and we and our people shall go up to the tops of the mountains that are near, and will camp upon them, to watch that none go out of the city. So they and their wives and their children shall be consumed with famine, and before the sword come against them, they shall be overthrown in the streets where they dwell. Thus shalt thou render them an evil reward; because they rebelled, and met not thy person peaceably."

And these words pleased Holofernes and all his servants, and he appointed to do as they had spoken. So the camp of the children of Ammon departed, and with them five thousand of the Assyrians, and they pitched in the valley, and took the waters, and the fountains of the waters of the children of Israel. Then the children of Esau went up with the children of Ammon, and camped in the hill country over against Dothaim: and they sent some of them toward the south, and toward the east, over against Ekrebel, which is near unto Chusi, that is upon the brook Mochmur; and the rest of the army of the Assyrians camped in the plain, and covered the face of the whole land; and their tents and carriages were pitched to a very great multitude.

Then the children of Israel cried unto the Lord their God, because their heart failed, for all their enemies had compassed them round about, and there was no way to escape out from among them. Thus all the company of Assur remained about them, both their footmen, chariots, and

horsemen, four and thirty days, so that all their vessels of water failed all the inhabitants of Bethulia. And the cisterns were emptied, and they had not water to drink their fill for one day; for they gave them drink by measure. Therefore their young children were out of heart, and their women and young men fainted for thirst, and fell down in the streets of the city, and by the passages of the gates, and there was no longer any strength in them. Then all the people assembled to Ozias, and to the chief of the city, both young men, and women, and children, and cried with a loud voice, and said before all the elders: "God be judge between us and you: for ye have done us great injury, in that ye have not required peace of the children of Assur. For now we have no helper: but God hath sold us into their hands, that we should be thrown down before them with thirst and great destruction. Now therefore call them unto you, and deliver the whole city for a spoil to the people of Holofernes, and to all his army. For it is better for us to be made a spoil unto them, than to die for thirst: for we will be his servants, that our souls may live, and not see the death of our infants before our eyes, nor our wives nor our children to die. We take to witness against you the heaven and the earth, and our God and Lord of our fathers, which punisheth us according to our sins and the sins of our fathers, that He do not according as we have said this day."

Then there was great weeping with one consent in the midst of the assembly; and they cried unto the Lord God with a loud voice. Then said Ozias to them: "Brethren, be of good courage, let us yet endure five days, in the which space the Lord our God may turn His mercy toward us; for He will not forsake us utterly. And if these days pass, and there come no help unto us, I will do according to your word." And he dispersed the people, every one to their own charge; and they went unto the walls and towers of their city, and sent the women and children into their houses: and they were very low brought in the city.

Now at that time Judith heard thereof, which was the daughter of Merari, the son of Ox, the son of Joseph, the son of Oziel, the son of Elcia, the son of Ananias, the son of Gedeon, the son of Raphaim, the son of Acitho, the son of Eliu, the son of Eliab, the son of Nathanael, the son of Samael, the son of Salasadai, the son of Israel. And Manasses was her husband, of her tribe and kindred, who died in the barley harvest. For as he stood overseeing them that bound sheaves in the field, the heat came upon his head, and he fell on his bed, and died in the city of Bethulia: and they buried him with his fathers in the field between Dothaim and Balamo. So Judith was a widow in her house three years and four months. And she made her a tent upon the top of her house, and put on sackcloth upon her loins, and ware her widow's apparel. And she fasted all the days of her widowhood, save the eves of the sabbaths, and the sabbaths, and the eves of the new moons, and the new moons, and the feasts and solemn

days of the house of Israel. She was also of a goodly countenance, and very beautiful to behold: and her husband Manasses had left her gold, and silver, and menservants, and maidservants, and cattle, and lands; and she remained upon them. And there was none that gave her an ill word; for she feared God greatly. Now when she heard the evil words of the people against the governor, that they fainted for lack of water; for Judith had heard all the words that Ozias had spoken unto them, and that he had sworn to deliver the city unto the Assyrians after five days; then she sent her waitingwoman, that had the government of all things that she had, to call Ozias and Chabris and Charmis, the ancients of the city. And they came unto her, and she said unto them:

"Hear me now, O ye governors of the inhabitants of Bethulia: for your words that ye have spoken before the people this day are not right, touching this oath which ye made and pronounced between God and you, and have promised to deliver the city to our enemies, unless within these days the Lord turn to help you. And now who are ye that have tempted God this day, and stand instead of God among the children of men? And now try the Lord Almighty, but ye shall never know any thing. For ye cannot find the depth of the heart of man, neither can ye perceive the things that he thinketh: then how can ye search out God, that hath made all these things, and know His mind, or comprehend His purpose? Nay, my brethren, provoke not the Lord our God to anger. For if He will not help us within these five days, He hath power to defend us when He will, even every day, or to destroy us before our enemies. Do not bind the counsels of the Lord our God: for God is not as man, that He may be threatened; neither is He as the son of man, that He should be wavering. Therefore let us wait for salvation of Him, and call upon Him to help us, and He will hear our voice, if it please Him. For there arose none in our age, neither is there any now in these days, neither tribe, nor family, nor people, nor city, among us, which worship gods made with hands, as hath been aforetime. For the which cause our fathers were given to the sword, and for a spoil, and had a great fall before our enemies. But we know none other god, therefore we trust that He will not despise us, nor any of our nation. For if we be taken so, all Judea shall lie waste, and our sanctuary shall be spoiled; and He will require the profanation thereof at our mouth. And the slaughter of our brethren, and the captivity of the country, and the desolation of our inheritance, will He turn upon our heads among the Gentiles, wheresoever we shall be in bondage; and we shall be an offence and a reproach to all them that possess us. For our servitude shall not be directed to favour: but the Lord our God shall turn it to dishonour. Now therefore, O brethren, let us shew an example to our brethren, because their hearts depend upon us, and the sanctuary, and the house, and the altar, rest upon us. Moreover let us give thanks to the Lord our God, which trieth us, even as He did our fathers. Remember what things He

did to Abraham, and how He tried Isaac, and what happened to Jacob in Mesopotamia of Syria, when he kept the sheep of Laban his mother's brother. For He hath not tried us in the fire, as He did them, for the examination of their hearts, neither hath He taken vengeance on us: but the Lord doth scourge them that come near unto Him, to admonish them."

Then said Ozias to her: "All that thou hast spoken hast thou spoken with a good heart, and there is none that may gainsay thy words. For this is not the first day wherein thy wisdom is manifested; but from the beginning of thy days all the people have known thy understanding, because the disposition of thine heart is good. But the people were very thirsty, and compelled us to do unto them as we have spoken, and to bring an oath upon ourselves, which we will not break. Therefore now pray thou for us, because thou art a godly woman, and the Lord will send us rain to fill our cisterns, and we shall faint no more." Then said Judith unto them: "Hear me, and I will do a thing, which shall go throughout all generations to the children of our nation. Ye shall stand this night in the gate, and I will go forth with my waitingwoman: and within the days that ye have promised to deliver the city to our enemies the Lord will visit Israel by mine hand. But enquire not ye of mine act: for I will not declare it unto you, till the things be finished that I do." Then said Ozias and the princes unto her: "Go in peace, and the Lord God be before thee, to take vengeance on our enemies." So they returned from the tent, and went to their wards.

Then Judith fell upon her face, and put ashes upon her head, and uncovered the sackcloth wherewith she was clothed; and about the time that the incense of that evening was offered in Jerusalem in the house of the Lord Judith cried with a loud voice, and said: "O Lord God of my father Simeon, to whom Thou gavest a sword to take vengeance of the strangers, who loosened the girdle of a maid to defile her, and discovered the thigh to her shame, and polluted her virginity to her reproach; for Thou saidst, It shall not be so; and yet they did so: wherefore Thou gavest their rulers to be slain, so that they dyed their bed in blood, being deceived, and smotest the servants with their lords, and the lords upon their thrones; and hast given their wives for a prey, and their daughters to be captives; and all their spoils to be divided among Thy dear children; which were moved with Thy zeal, and abhorred the pollution of their blood, and called upon Thee for aid: O God, O my God, hear me also a widow. For Thou hast wrought not only those things, but also the things which fell out before, and which ensued after; Thou hast thought upon the things which are now, and which are to come. Yea, what things Thou didst determine were ready at hand, and said, Lo, we are here: for all Thy ways are prepared, and Thy judgments are in Thy foreknowledge. For, behold, the Assyrians are multiplied in their power; they are exalted with horse and

men; they glory in the strength of their footmen; they trust in shield, and spear, and bow, and sling; and know not that Thou art the Lord that breakest the battles: the Lord is Thy name. Throw down their strength in Thy power, and bring down their force in Thy wrath: for they have purposed to defile Thy sanctuary, and to pollute the tabernacle where Thy glorious name resteth, and to cast down with sword the horn of Thy altar. Behold their pride, and send Thy wrath upon their heads: give into mine hand, which am a widow, the power that I have conceived. Smite by the deceit of my lips the servant with the prince, and the prince with the servant: break down their stateliness by the hand of a woman. For Thy power standeth not in multitude, nor Thy might in strong men: for Thou art a God of the afflicted, an helper of the oppressed, an upholder of the weak, a protector of the forlorn, a saviour of them that are without hope. I pray Thee, I pray Thee, O God of my father, and God of the inheritance of Israel, Lord of the heavens and earth, Creator of the waters, King of every creature, hear Thou my prayer: and make my speech and deceit to be their wound and stripe, who have purposed cruel things against Thy covenant, and Thy hallowed house, and against the top of Sion, and against the house of the possession of Thy children. And make every nation and tribe to acknowledge that Thou art the God of all power and might, and that there is none other that protecteth the people of Israel but Thou."

Now after that she had ceased to cry unto the God of Israel, and had made an end of all these words, she rose where she had fallen down, and called her maid, and went down into the house, in the which she abode in the sabbath days, and in her feast days, and pulled off the sackcloth which she had on, and put off the garments of her widowhood, and washed her body all over with water, and anointed herself with precious ointment, and braided the hair of her head, and put on a tire upon it, and put on her garments of gladness, wherewith she was clad during the life of Manasses her husband. And she took sandals upon her feet, and put about her her bracelets, and her chains, and her rings, and her earrings, and all her ornaments, and decked herself bravely, to allure the eyes of all men that should see her. Then she gave her maid a bottle of wine, and a cruse of oil, and filled a bag with parched corn, and lumps of figs, and with fine bread; so she folded all these things together, and laid them upon her. Thus they went forth to the gate of the city of Bethulia, and found standing there Ozias, and the ancients of the city, Chabris and Charmis. And when they saw her, that her countenance was altered, and her apparel was changed, they wondered at her beauty very greatly, and said unto her: "The God, the God of our fathers, give thee favor, and accomplish thine enterprizes to the glory of the children of Israel, and to the exaltation of Jerusalem." Then they worshipped God. And she said unto them: "Command the gates of the city to be opened unto me, that I may go

forth to accomplish the things whereof ye have spoken with me." So they commanded the young men to open unto her, as she had spoken.

And when they had done so, Judith went out, she, and her maid with her; and the men of the city looked after her, until she was gone down the mountain, and till she had passed the valley, and could see her no more. Thus they went straight forth in the valley: and the first watch of the Assyrians met her, and took her, and asked her: "Of what people art thou? and whence comest thou? and whither goest thou?" And she said: "I am a woman of the Hebrews, and am fled from them: for they shall be given you to be consumed: and I am coming before Holofernes the chief captain of your army, to declare words of truth; and I will shew him a way, whereby he shall go, and win all the hill country, without losing the body or life of any one of his men." Now when the men heard her words, and beheld her countenance, they wondered greatly at her beauty, and said unto her: "Thou hast saved thy life, in that thou hast hasted to come down to the presence of our lord: now therefore come to his tent, and some of us shall conduct thee, until they have delivered thee to his hands. And when thou standest before him, be not afraid in thine heart, but shew unto him according to thy word; and he will intreat thee well." Then they chose out of them an hundred men to accompany her and her maid; and they brought her to the tent of Holofernes.

Then was there a concourse throughout all the camp: for her coming was noised among the tents, and they came about her, as she stood without the tent of Holofernes, till they told him of her. And they wondered at her beauty, and admired the children of Israel because of her, and every one said to his neighbor: "Who would despise this people, that have among them such women? surely it is not good that one man of them be left, who being let go might deceive the whole earth." And they that lay near Holofernes went out, and all his servants, and they brought her into the tent. Now Holofernes rested upon his bed under a canopy, which was woven with purple, and gold, and emeralds, and precious stones. So they shewed him of her; and he came out before his tent with silver lamps going before him. And when Judith was come before him and his servants, they all marvelled at the beauty of her countenance; and she fell down upon her face, and did reverence unto him: and his servants took her up.

Then said Holofernes unto her: "Woman, be of good comfort, fear not in thine heart: for I never hurt any that was willing to serve Nebuchadnezzar, the king of all the earth. Now therefore, if thy people that dwelleth in the mountains had not set light by me, I would not have lifted up my spear against them: but they have done these things to themselves. But now tell me wherefore thou art fled from them, and art come unto us: for thou art come for safeguard; be of good comfort, thou shalt live this night, and hereafter: for none shall hurt thee, but intreat thee well, as they do the servants of king Nebuchadnezzar my lord."

Then Judith said unto him: "Receive the words of thy servant, and suffer thine handmaid to speak in thy presence, and I will declare no lie to my lord this night. And if thou wilt follow the words of thine handmaid, God will bring the thing perfectly to pass by thee; and my lord shall not fail of his purposes. As Nebuchadnezzar king of all the earth liveth, and as his power liveth, who hath sent thee for the upholding of every living thing: for not only men shall serve him by thee, but also the beasts of the field, and the cattle, and the fowls of the air, shall live by thy power under Nebuchadnezzar and all his house. For we have heard of thy wisdom and thy policies, and it is reported in all the earth, that thou only art excellent in all the kingdom, and mighty in knowledge, and wonderful in feats of war. Now as concerning the matter, which Achior did speak in thy council, we have heard his words; for the men of Bethulia saved him, and he declared unto them all that he had spoken unto thee. Therefore, O lord and governor, reject not his word; but lay it up in thine heart, for it is true: for our nation shall not be punished, neither can the sword prevail against them, except they sin against their God. And now, that my lord be not defeated and frustrate of his purpose, even death is now fallen upon them, and their sin hath overtaken them, wherewith they will provoke their God to anger, whensoever they shall do that which is not fit to be done: for their victuals fail them, and all their water is scant, and they have determined to lay hands upon their cattle, and purposed to consume all those things, that God hath forbidden them to eat by His laws: and are resolved to spend the firstfruits of the corn, and the tenths of wine and oil, which they had sanctified, and reserved for the priests that serve in Jerusalem before the face of our God; the which things it is not lawful for any of the people so much as to touch with their hands. For they have sent some to Jerusalem, because they also that dwell there have done the like, to bring them a licence from the senate. Now when they shall bring them word, they will forthwith do it, and they shall be given thee to be destroyed the same day. Wherefore I thine handmaid, knowing all this, am fled from their presence; and God hath sent me to work things with thee, whereat all the earth shall be astonished, and whosoever shall hear it. For thy servant is religious, and serveth the God of heaven day and night: now therefore, my lord, I will remain with thee, and thy servant will go out by night into the valley, and I will pray unto God, and He will tell me when they have committed their sins: and I will come and shew it unto thee: then thou shalt go forth with all thine army, and there shall be none of them that shall resist thee. And I will lead thee through the midst of Judea, until thou come before Jerusalem; and I will set thy throne in the midst thereof; and thou shalt drive them as sheep that have no shepherd, and a dog shall not so much as open its mouth at thee: for these things were told me according to my foreknowledge, and they were declared unto me, and I am sent to tell thee."

Then her words pleased Holofernes and all his servants; and they marvelled at her wisdom, and said: "There is not such a woman from one end of the earth to the other, both for beauty of face, and wisdom of words." Likewise Holofernes said unto her: "God hath done well to send thee before the people, that strength might be in our hands and destruction upon them that lightly regard my lord. And now thou art both beautiful in thy countenance, and witty in thy words: surely if thou do as thou hast spoken, thy God shall be my God, and thou shalt dwell in the house of king Nebuchadnezzar, and shalt be renowned through the whole earth."

Then he commanded to bring her in where his plate was set; and bade that they should prepare for her of his own meats, and that she should drink of his own wine. And Judith said: "I will not eat thereof, lest there be an offence: but provision shall be made for me of the things that I have brought." Then Holofernes said unto her: "If thy provision should fail, how should we give thee the like? for there be none with us of thy nation." Then said Judith unto him: "As thy soul liveth, my lord, thine handmaid shall not spend those things that I have, before the Lord work by mine hand the things that He hath determined." Then the servants of Holofernes brought her into the tent, and she slept till midnight, and she arose when it was toward the morning watch, and sent to Holofernes, saying: "Let my lord now command that thine handmaid may go forth unto prayer." Then Holofernes commanded his guard that they should not stay her: thus she abode in the camp three days, and went out in the night into the valley of Bethulia, and washed herself in a fountain of water by the camp. And when she came out, she besought the Lord God of Israel to direct her way to the raising up of the children of her people. So she came in clean, and remained in the tent, until she did eat her meat at evening.

And in the fourth day Holofernes made a feast to his own servants only, and called none of the officers to the banquet. Then said he to Bagoas the eunuch, who had charge over all that he had: "Go now, and persuade this Hebrew woman which is with thee, that she come unto us, and eat and drink with us. For, lo, it will be a shame for our person, if we shall let such a woman go, not having had her company; for if we draw her not unto us, she will laugh us to scorn." Then went Bagoas from the presence of Holofernes, and came to her, and he said: "Let not this fair damsel fear to come to my lord, and to be honoured in his presence, and drink wine, and be merry with us, and be made this day as one of the daughters of the Assyrians, which serve in the house of Nebuchadnezzar." Then said Judith unto him: "Who am I now, that I should gainsay my lord? surely whatsoever pleaseth him I will do speedily, and it shall be my joy unto the day of my death." So she arose, and decked herself with her apparel and all her woman's attire, and her maid went and laid soft

skins on the ground for her over against Holofernes, which she had received of Bagoas for her daily use, that she might sit and eat upon them. Now when Judith came in and sat down, Holofernes' heart was ravished with her, and his mind was moved, and he desired greatly her company; for he waited a time to deceive her, from the day that he had seen her. Then said Holofernes unto her: "Drink now, and be merry with us." So Judith said: "I will drink now, my lord, because my life is magnified in me this day more than all the days since I was born." Then she took and ate and drank before him what her maid had prepared. And Holofernes took great delight in her, and drank much more wine than he had drunk at any time in one day since he was born.

Now when the evening was come, his servants made haste to depart, and Bagoas shut his tent without, and dismissed the waiters from the presence of his lord; and they went to their beds: for they were all weary, because the feast had been long. And Judith was left alone in the tent, and Holofernes lying along upon his bed: for he was filled with wine. Now Judith had commanded her maid to stand without her bedchamber, and to wait for her coming forth, as she did daily: for she said she would go forth to her prayers, and she spake to Bagoas according to the same purpose. So all went forth, and none was left in the bedchamber, neither little nor great. Then Judith, standing by his bed, said in her heart: "O Lord God of all power, look at this present upon the works of mine hands for the exaltation of Jerusalem. For now is the time to help Thine inheritance, and to execute mine enterprizes to the destruction of the enemies which are risen against us." Then she came to the pillar of the bed, which was at Holofernes' head, and took down his scimitar from thence, and approached to his bed, and took hold of the hair of his head, and said: "Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, this day." And she smote twice upon his neck with all her might, and she took away his head from him, and tumbled his body down from the bed, and pulled down the canopy from the pillars; and anon after she went forth, and gave Holofernes' head to her maid; and she put it in her bag of meat: so they twain went together according to their custom unto prayer: and when they passed the camp, they compassed the valley, and went up the mountain of Bethulia, and came to the gates thereof.

Then said Judith afar off to the watchmen at the gate: "Open, open now the gate: God, even our God, is with us, to shew His power yet in Jerusalem, and His forces against the enemy, as He hath even done this day." Now when the men of her city heard her voice, they made haste to go down to the gate of their city, and they called the elders of the city. And then they ran all together, both small and great, for it was strange unto them that she was come: so they opened the gate, and received them, and made a fire for a light, and stood round about them. Then she said to them with a loud voice: "Praise, praise God, praise God, I say, for He

hath not taken away His mercy from the house of Israel, but hath destroyed our enemies by mine hands this night." So she took the head out of the bag, and shewed it, and said unto them: "Behold the head of Holofernes, the chief captain of the army of Assur, and behold the canopy, wherein he did lie in his drunkenness; and the Lord hath smitten him by the hand of a woman. As the Lord liveth, who hath kept me in my way that I went, my countenance hath deceived him to his destruction, and yet hath he not committed sin with me, to defile and shame me." Then all the people were wonderfully astonished, and bowed themselves, and worshipped God, and said with one accord: "Blessed be Thou, O our God, which hast this day brought to nought the enemies of Thy people." Then said Ozias unto her: "O daughter, blessed art thou of the Most High God above all the women upon the earth; and blessed be the Lord God, which hath created the heavens and the earth, which hath directed thee to the cutting off of the head of the chief of our enemies. For this thy confidence shall not depart from the heart of men, which remember the power of God for ever. And God turn these things to thee for a perpetual praise, to visit thee in good things, because thou hast not spared thy life for the affliction of our nation, but hast revenged our ruin, walking a straight way before our God." And all the people said: "So be it, so be it."

Then said Judith unto them: "Hear me now, my brethren, and take this head, and hang it upon the highest place of your walls. And so soon as the morning shall appear, and the sun shall come forth upon the earth, take ye every one his weapons, and go forth every valiant man out of the city, and set ye a captain over them, as though ye would go down into the field toward the watch of the Assyrians; but go not down. Then they shall take their armor, and shall go into their camp, and rouse up the captains of the army of Assur, and they shall run to the tent of Holofernes, but shall not find him: then fear shall fall upon them, and they shall flee before your face. So ye, and all that inhabit the coast of Israel, shall pursue them, and overthrow them as they go. But before ye do these things, call me Achior the Ammonite, that he may see and know him that despised the house of Israel, and that sent him to us, as it were to his death."

Then they called Achior out of the house of Ozias; and when he was come, and saw the head of Holofernes in a man's hand in the assembly of the people, he fell down on his face, and his spirit failed. But when they had recovered him, he fell at Judith's feet, and reverenced her, and said: "Blessed art thou in every tent of Juda, and in all nations, which hearing thy name shall be astonished. Now therefore tell me all the things that thou hast done in these days." Then Judith declared unto him in the midst of the people all that she had done, from the day that she went forth unto that hour she spake unto them. And when she had left off speaking, the people shouted with a loud voice, and made a joyful noise

in their city. And when Achior had seen all that the God of Israel had done, he believed in God greatly, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was joined unto the house of Israel unto this day.

And as soon as the morning arose, they hanged the head of Holofernes upon the wall, and every man took his weapons, and they went forth by bands unto the ascents of the mountain. But when the Assyrians saw them, they sent to their leaders, which came to their captains and tribunes, and to every one of their rulers. So they came to Holofernes' tent, and said to him that had the charge of all his things: "Waken now our lord: for the slaves have been bold to come down against us to battle, that they may be utterly destroyed." Then went in Bagoas, and knocked at the door of the tent; for he thought that he had slept with Judith. But because none answered, he opened it, and went into the bedchamber, and found him cast upon the floor dead, and his head was taken from him. Therefore he cried with a loud voice, with weeping, and sighing, and a mighty cry, and rent his garments. After he went into the tent where Judith lodged: and when he found her not, he leaped out to the people, and cried: "These slaves have dealt treacherously; one woman of the Hebrews hath brought shame upon the house of king Nebuchadnezzar: for, behold, Holofernes lieth upon the ground without a head." When the captains of the Assyrians' army heard these words, they rent their coats and their minds were wonderfully troubled, and there was a cry and a very great noise throughout the camp.

And when they that were in the tents heard, they were astonished at the thing that was done. And fear and trembling fell upon them, so that there was no man that durst abide in the sight of his neighbor, but rushing out all together, they fled into every way of the plain, and of the hill country. They also that had camped in the mountains round about Bethulia fled away. Then the children of Israel, every one that was a warrior among them, rushed out upon them. Then sent Ozias to Betomasthem, and to Bebai, and Chobai, and Cola, and to all the coasts of Israel, such as should tell the things that were done, and that all should rush forth upon their enemies to destroy them. Now when the children of Israel heard it, they all fell upon them with one consent, and slew them unto Chobai: likewise also they that came from Jerusalem, and from all the hill country, (for men had told them what things were done in the camp of their enemies,) and they that were in Gilead, and in Galilee, chased them with a great slaughter, until they were past Damascus and the borders thereof. And the residue, that dwelt at Bethulia, fell upon the camp of Assur, and spoiled them, and were greatly enriched. And the children of Israel that returned from the slaughter had that which remained; and the villages and the cities, that were in the mountains and in the plain, gat many spoils: for the multitude was very great.

Then Joakim the high priest, and the ancients of the children of Israel

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that dwelt in Jerusalem, came to behold the good things that God had shewed to Israel, and to see Judith, and to salute her. And when they came unto her, they blessed her with one accord, and said unto her: "Thou art the exaltation of Jerusalem, thou art the great glory of Israel, thou art the great rejoicing of our nation: thou hast done all these things by thine hand: thou hast done much good to Israel, and God is pleased therewith: blessed be thou of the Almighty Lord for evermore." And all the people said: "So be it." And the people spoiled the camp the space of thirty days: and they gave unto Judith Holofernes' tent and all his plate, and beds, and vessels, and all his stuff: and she took it, and laid it on her mule; and made ready her carts, and laid them thereon.

Then all the women of Israel ran together to see her, and blessed her, and made a dance among them for her: and she took branches in her hand, and gave also to the women that were with her. And they put a garland of olive upon her and her maid that was with her, and she went before all the people in the dance, leading all the women: and all the men of Israel followed in their armor with garlands, and with songs in their mouths. Then Judith began to sing this thanksgiving in all Israel, and all the people sang after her this song of praise. And Judith said,

Begin unto my God with timbrels,
Sing unto my Lord with cymbals:
Tune unto Him a new psalm:
Exalt Him, and call upon His name.
For God breaketh the battles:
For among the camps in the midst of the people
He hath delivered me out of the hands of them that persecuted me.
Assur came out of the mountains from the north,
He came with ten thousands of his army,
The multitude whereof stopped the torrents,
And their horsemen have covered the hills.
He bragged that he would burn up my borders,
And kill my young men with the sword.
And dash the sucking children against the ground,
And make mine infants as a prey,
And my virgins as a spoil.
But the Almighty Lord hath disappointed them by the hand of a woman.
For the mighty one did not fall by the young men,
Neither did the sons of the Titans smite him,
Nor high giants set upon him:
But Judith the daughter of Merari weakened him
With the beauty of her countenance.
For she put off the garment of her widowhood
For the exaltation of those that were oppressed in Israel,

And anointed her face with ointment,
And bound her hair in a tire,
And took a linen garment to deceive him.
Her sandals ravished his eyes,
Her beauty took his mind prisoner,
And the scimitar passed through his neck.
The Persians quaked at her boldness,
And the Medes were daunted at her hardiness.
Then my afflicted shouted for joy,
And my weak ones cried aloud;
But they were astonished:
These lifted up their voices, but they were overthrown.
The sons of the damsels have pierced them through,
And wounded them as fugitives' children:
They perished by the battle of the Lord.
I will sing unto the Lord a new song:
O Lord, Thou art great and glorious,
Wonderful in strength, and invincible.
Let all creatures serve Thee:
For Thou spakest, and they were made,
Thou didst send forth Thy spirit, and it created them,
And there is none that can resist Thy voice.
For the mountains shall be moved from their foundations with the waters,
The rocks shall melt as wax at Thy presence:
Yet Thou art merciful to them that fear Thee.
For all sacrifice is too little for a sweet savour unto Thee,
And all the fat is not sufficient for Thy burnt offering:
But he that feareth the Lord is great at all times.
Woe to the nations that rise up against my kindred!
The Lord Almighty will take vengeance of them in the day of judgment,
In putting fire and worms in their flesh;
And they shall feel them, and weep for ever.

Now as soon as they entered into Jerusalem, they worshipped the Lord; and as soon as the people were purified, they offered their burnt offerings, and their free offerings, and their gifts. Judith also dedicated all the stuff of Holofernes, which the people had given her, and gave the canopy, which she had taken out of his bedchamber, for a gift unto the Lord. So the people continued feasting in Jerusalem before the sanctuary for the space of three months, and Judith remained with them. After this time every one returned to his own inheritance, and Judith went to Bethulia, and remained in her own possession, and was in her time honourable in all the country. And many desired her, but none knew her all the days of her life, after that Manasses her husband was dead, and was gathered to

his people. But she increased more and more in honour, and waxed old in her husband's house, being an hundred and five years old, and made her maid free; so she died in Bethulia: and they buried her in the cave of her husband Manasses. And the house of Israel lamented her seven days: and before she died, she did distribute her goods to all them that were nearest of kindred to Manasses her husband, and to them that were the nearest of her kindred. And there was none that made the children of Israel any more afraid in the days of Judith, nor a long time after her death.

Ancient Greece

INTRODUCTION

THE Greek novel, or romance, as an independent literary entity, was a late development. The most celebrated, and surely the best of the few surviving specimens is the *Daphnis and Chloe* of Longus, written at least five hundred years after the close of the great period of Greek literature.

Stories and tales of many kinds are, of course, to be found in all periods of Greek civilisation: in the work of Homer and Hesiod in the form of legends about gods and heroes; in Herodotus and the other writers of history; and here and there in the works of the philosophers and poets. But what we usually designate as tales or novels, narratives written in prose for the purpose of amusing and interesting readers, developed during and after the period when Greece was in full decadence.

We are told by the authorities that the Greek novel is of Oriental origin. Mr. Gaselee (in the Loeb edition of *Daphnis and Chloe*) states: "The most significant feature of the Greek novels is their un-Greek character." This is observable even in Herodotus' *History* and in the *Cyropedia* of Xenophon.

It is not necessary here to discuss the Milesian Tales of Asia Minor (they have all been lost except two, and these are re-tellings in Latin), since they were probably only short and episodic, nor to speculate on their possible influence over the writers of the longer romances. The earliest of these longer novels that survives belongs probably to the Second Century, A.D., and the latest (an imitation), to the Twelfth. Chariton, Xenophon of Ephesus, Antonius Diogenes, Heliodorus, Longus, and Achilles Tatius, all belong to the Second and Third Centuries. The Byzantine imitators persisted in working over the old material of their predecessors far into the Middle Ages.

Except for *Daphnis and Chloe*, the Greek romances are rather long-winded affairs, involved, affected in style, and showing little skill in the development of plot.

LONGUS

(Second Century, A.D.?)

THE latest writer on the subject states that nothing is "known of the author" of *Daphnis and Chloe*. It is thought that he wrote some time toward the end of the Second Century after Christ, and probably not much later than the beginning of the following Century. He may, someone guesses, have been a native of the Island of Lesbos.

Daphnis and Chloe, the only so-called pastoral romance that has come down to us, is one of the most charming little novels written in ancient times. For modern readers its charm lies in its descriptions and its love scenes. There are human touches here and there sufficient to explain its popularity with Europeans ever since the discovery of the MS some centuries ago.

The novel was first published by Jacques Amyot in his French translation in 1559. The original Greek did not appear until 1598. The first English version appeared in 1587. The present translation was published in London in 1657. On the original title-page we read: "Daphnis and Chloe, a Most Sweet and Pleasant Pastoral Romance for Young Ladies by Geo. Thornley, Gent." In deference, however, to the tastes of most modern readers (though not to my own) I follow precedent in omitting a very few passages, which the editor of Thornley's translation has permitted to stand in a Latin version. I have instead made use of the conventional asterisks.

The present text is reprinted, by permission of the publisher, from *Daphnis and Chloe, by Longus*, with the English translation by George Thornley, Revised and Augmented by J. M. Edmonds, . . . etc. [Loeb Library] William Heinemann, London, 1924.

DAPHNIS AND CHLOE

THE FIRST BOOK

MYTILENE is a city in Lesbos, and by ancient titles of honor it is the great and fair Mytilene. For it is distinguished and divided (the sea flowing in) by a various euripus, and is adorned with bridges built of white polished marble. You would not think you saw a city, but an island. From this Mytilene some two hundred furlongs there lay a manor of a certain rich lord, the most sweet and pleasant prospect under all the eyes of heaven. There were mountains stored with wild beasts for game; there were hills and banks that were spread with vines; the fields abounded with all sorts of corn; the valleys with orchards and gardens and purls from the hills; the pastures with sheep and goats and kine; the sea-billows, swelling and gushing upon a shore which lay extended along in an open horizon, made a soft magic and enchantment.

In this sweet country, the field and farm of Mytilene, a goatherd dwelling, by name Lamo, found one of his goats suckling an infant-boy, by such a chance, it seems, as this: There was a lawn, and in it a dell, and in the nethermost part of the dell a place all lined with wandering ivy, the ground furred over with a finer sort of grass, and on that the infant lay. The goat coming often hither, disappeared very much, neglecting still her own kid to attend the wretched child. Lamo observes her frequent outs and discursations, and pitying that the kid should be so forsaken, follows her even at high noon. And anon he sees the goat bestriding the child carefully, lest she should chance to hurt it with her hooves, and the infant drawing milk as from the breast of a kind mother. And wondering at it, as well he might, he comes nearer and finds it a man-child, a lusty boy and beautiful, and wrapped in richer clothes then you should find upon a foundling. His mantle or little cloak was purple, fastened with a golden brooch, and by his side a little dagger, the handle polished ivory.

He thought at first to take away the tokens and take no thought about the child. But afterwards conceiving shame within himself if he should not imitate the kindness and philanthropy he had seen even in that goat, waiting till the night came on he brings all to Myrtale his wife, the boy, his precious trinkets, and the goat. But Myrtale, all amazed at this, "What?" quoth she, "do goats cast boys?" Then he fell to tell her all, namely how he had found him exposed, how suckled; how overcome by mere shame he could not leave the sweet child to die in that forsaken thicket. And therefore, when he discerned Myrtale was of his mind, the things exposed together with him are laid up carefully and hid, they say the boy's their own child, and put him to the goat to nurse. And that his name might be indeed a shepherd's name, they agreed to call him Daphnis.

And now, when two years' time was past, a shepherd of the neighboring fields, Dryas by name, had the luck, watching his flock, to see such sights and find such rarities as Lamo did. There was a solitary sacred cave of the Nymphs, a huge rock, hollow and vaulted within, but round without. The statues or images of the Nymphs were cut out most curiously in stone; their feet unshod, their arms bare to the shoulder, their hair loose over their necks, their eyes sweetly smiling, their lawny petticoats tucked up at the waist. The whole presence made a figure as of a divine amusing dance or masque. The mouth of the cave was in the midst of that great rock; and from it gushed up a strong crystal fountain, and running off in a fair current or brook, made before the holy cave a fresh, green, and flowery mead. There were hanging up and consecrated there milking-pails, pipes, and hautboys, whistles, and reeds, the offerings of the ancient shepherds.

To this cave the often gadding of a sheep newly delivered of young,

made the shepherd often think that she undoubtedly was lost. Desiring therefore to correct the straggler and reduce her to her rule, of a green withe he made a snare, and looked to catch her in the cave. But when he came there he saw things he never dreamed of. For he saw her giving suck from her dugs in a very human manner to an infant, which, without crying, greedily did lay, first to one dug then the tother, a most neat and fair mouth; for when the child had sucked enough, the careful nurse licked it still and trimmed it up. That infant was a girl, and in such manner as before, there lay tokens beside her; a girdle embroidered with gold, a pair of shoes gilded, and ankle-bands all of gold.

Wherefore Dryas, thinking with himself that this could not come about without the providence of the Gods, and learning mercy and love from the sheep, takes her up into his arms, puts her monuments into his scrip, and prays to the Nymphs they may have happily preserved and brought up their suppliant and votary. Now therefore, when it was time to drive home his flocks, he comes to his cottage and tells all that he had seen to his wife, shews her what he had found, bids her think she is her daughter, and, however, nurse her up, all unbeknown, as her child. Nape, that was her name, began presently to be a mother, and with a kind of jealousy would appear to love the child lest that ewe should get more praise; and, like Myrtale before, gives her the pastoral name of Chloe to assure us it's their own.

These infants grew up apace, and still their beauty appeared too excellent to suit with rustics or derive at all from clowns. And Daphnis now is fifteen and Chloe younger two years, when upon one night Lamo and Dryas had their visions in their sleep. They thought they saw those Nymphs, the Goddesses of the cave out of which the fountain gushed out into a stream, and where Dryas found Chloe; that they delivered Daphnis and Chloe to a certain young boy, very disdainful, very fair, one that had wings at his shoulders, wore a bow and little darts; and that this boy did touch them both with the very selfsame dart, and commanded it from thenceforth one should feed his flock of goats, the other keep her flock of sheep.

This dream being dreamed by both, they could not but conceive grief to think that those should be nothing but shepherds or goatherds to whom they had read better fortune from their monuments, and indeed for that cause had both allowed them a finer sort of meat, and bin at charge to teach them letters and whatsoever other things were passing brave among the rural swains and girls. Yet nevertheless it seemed fit that the mandates of the Gods concerning them who by their providence were saved, should be attended and obeyed.

And having told their dreams one to another and sacrificed in the cave of the Nymphs to that winged boy (for his name they knew not), they sent them out shepherds with their flocks, and to everything instructed: how

to feed before high noon and drive them to fresh pasture when the scorching glare declined, when to lead them to water, when to bring them to the folds, what cattle was disciplined with the crook, what commanded by the voice alone. And now this pretty pair of shepherds are as jocund in themselves as if they had got some great empire while they sit looking over their goodly flocks, and with more then usual kindness treated both the sheep and goats. For Chloe thankfully referred her preservation to a sheep, and Daphnis had not forgot to acknowledge his to a goat.

It was the beginning of spring, and all the flowers of the lawns, meadows, valleys and hills were now blowing. All was fresh and green. Now was there humming of bees, and chanting of melodious birds, and skipping of newborn lambs; the bees hummed in the meadows, the birds warbled in the groves, the lambs skipt on the hills. And now, when such a careless joy had filled those blest and happy fields, Daphnis and Chloe, as delicate and young folks will, would imitate the pleasant things they heard and saw. Hearing how the birds did chant it, they began to carol too, and seeing how the lambs skipt, tript their light and nimble measures. Then, to emulate the bees, they fall to cull the fairest flowers; some of which in toysome sport they cast in one another's bosoms, and of some platted garlands for the Nymphs; and always keeping near together, had and did all things in common; for Daphnis often gathered in the straggling sheep, and Chloe often drove the bolder venturous goats from the crags and precipices; and sometimes to one of them the care of both the flocks was left while the other did intend some pretty knack or toysome play.

For all their sports were sports of children and of shepherds. Chloe, scudding up and down and here and there picking up the whindlestraws, would make in plats a cage for a grasshopper, and be so wholly bent on that, that she was careless of her flocks. Daphnis on the other side, having cut the slender reeds and bored the quills or intervals between the joints, and with his soft wax joined and fitted one to another, took no care but to practise or devise some tune even from morning to the twilight. Their wine and their milk and whatsoever was brought from home to the fields, they had still in common. And a man might sooner see all the cattle separate from one another than he should Chloe and Daphnis asunder.

But while they are thus playing away their time to sweeten pleasure, afterwards Love in good earnest kindled up this fire. A wolf that had a kennel of whelps was come often ravenous upon the neighboring fields, and had borne away from other flocks many cattle, because she needed much prey to keep herself and those cubs. The villagers therefore meet together, and in the night they dig ditches a fathom wide and four fathom deep; of the earth flung up they scatter the more part all abroad at a

good distance, and laying over-cross the chasm long, dry, and rotten sticks, they strow them over with the earth that did remain, to make the ground like it was before; that if a hare do but offer to run there, she cannot choose but break those rods that were as brittle as the stubble, and then does easily make it known that that indeed was not true, but only counterfeited soil. Many such trap-ditches were now digged in the mountains and the fields; yet they could not take this wolf (for she could perceive them because of the sophistic and commentitious ground), but many of their sheep and goats were there destroyed, and there wanted but a little that Daphnis too was not slain. And it was on this chance.

Two he-goats were exasperated to fight, and the shock was furious. One of them, by the violence of the very first butt, had one of his horns broke. Upon the pain and grief of that, all in a fret and mighty chafe he betakes himself to flight, but the victor, pursuing him close, would not let him take breath. Daphnis was vexed to see the horn broke and that kind of malapertness of the goat. Up he catches a cudgel, and pursues the pursuer. But as it frequently happens when one hastes away as fast as possibly he can and the other with ardency pursues, there was no certain prospect of the things before them, but into the trap-ditch both fall, first the goat, then Daphnis. And indeed it was only this that served to save poor Daphnis, that he flundered down to the bottom a-cockhorse on the rough goat. There in a lamentable case he lay, waiting if perchance it might be somebody to draw him out. Chloe seeing the accident, away she flies to the ditch, and finding he was alive, calls for help to a herdsman of the adjoining fields. When he was come, he bustled about for a long cord, which holding, Daphnis might be drawn up; but finding none, Chloe in a tearing haste pulls off her stomacher or breastband, gives him it to let down, and standing on the pitbrim, they both began to draw and hale; and Daphnis, holding fast by it, nimbly followed Chloe's line, and so ascended to the top. They drew up too the wretched goat, which now had both his horns broke (so fiercely did the revenge of the vanquished pursue him); and they gave him to the herdsman to sacrifice, as a reward of the rescue and redemption of their lives. And if anybody missed him at home, they would say it was an invasion of wolves. And so returned to see after their sheep and goats.

And when they had found that all were feeding orderly, both goats and sheep, sitting down upon the trunk of an oak they began curiously to search whether he had hurt any limb in that terrible fall. But nothing was hurt, nothing bloodied; only his hair and the rest of his body were dirtied by mud and the soil which covered over and hid the trap. And therefore they thought it best before the accident was made known to Lamo and Myrtale, that he should wash himself in the cave of the Nymphs.

And coming there together with Chloe, he gave her his scrip and his shirt to hold, and standing by the spring fell to washing himself from top

to toe. Now his hair was long and black, and his body all brown and sunburnt, insomuch that the one seemed to have taken color from the shadow of the tother; and to Chloe's eye he seemed of a sweet and beautiful aspect, and when she wondered that she had not deemed him such before, she thought it must be the washing that was the cause of it. And when she washed his back and shoulders the flesh yielded so softly and gently to her hand, that again and again she privily touched herself to see if hers were more delicate than his. Sunset now coming on, they drove home their flocks, and that night there was but one thing in Chloe's mind, and that the wish she might see Daphnis at his washing again.

When they came out to pasture in the morning, and Daphnis, sitting down under the oak where they were wont, played his pipe and watched the flocks that lay around as if to listen to the music of it, Chloe, sitting close by, although she looked well after her sheep, looked better after Daphnis. And piping there, he seemed again to her goodly and beautiful to look to, and wondering again, she thought the cause must be the music; and so, when he was done, took the pipe from him and played, if haply she herself might be as beautiful. Then she asked him if he would come again to the bath, and when she persuaded him, watched him at it; and as she watched, put out her hand and touched him; and before she went home had praised his beauty, and that praise was the beginning of love.

What her passion was she knew not, for she was but a young girl and bred up among clowns, and as for love, had never so much as heard the name of it. But her heart was vexed within her, her eyes, whether she would or no, wandered hither and thither, and her speaking was ever Daphnis this and Daphnis that. She could neither eat nor take her rest; she neglected her flock; now she would laugh and now would weep, now would be sleeping and then again up and doing; and if her cheek was pale, in a twink it was flaming red. In sum, no heifer stung with a breese was so resty and changeable as the poor Chloe.

And one day when she was alone she made such lamentation as this: "I am sick now, but of what disease? I know not, save that I feel pain and there is no wound. I mourn, though none of my sheep is dead. I burn, and here I sit in the deepest shade. How many the briers have torn me, and I have not wept! How many the bees have stung me, and I have not squeaked. But this that pricks my heart is worse to bear than any of those. Daphnis is fair, but so are the flowers; and fair the sound of his pipe, but so is the voice of the nightingales: and yet I care nothing for those. Would to God I might have been his pipe that his mouth might inspirit me, or a goat that he might be my keeper! Thou cruel water! thou hast made Daphnis beautiful, but I for all my washing am still the same. Alas! sweet Nymphs, I am undone, and you will not lift a hand to save your fosterling. Whence shall you get garlands when I am gone? or

who shall bring up my poor lambs, and tend the prattling locust I was at such pains to catch? I used to set him before the cave to lull me to sleep with his pretty song, but now long of Daphnis I am fain to watch, and my locust prattles on in vain."

In such case was Chloe, and with such words she spoke, in her seeking after the name of love. But the oxherd Dorco (he that had drawn Daphnis and the he-goat out of the pit), a stripling of the first down, acquainted alike with the name and the works of love, not only on that day was straightway struck with love of Chloe, but every day that followed it he was the more inflamed, till at last, despising Daphnis for a child, he determined either by gifts or force to have his way.

For a beginning he brought them gifts, to Daphnis a pastoral pipe of nine quills bound with brass for wax, and to Chloe a fawnskin of the sort that Bacchae use, the color of it like the colors of a painted picture. Soon they believed him their friend, and he by little and little neglecting Daphnis came to bring Chloe every day either a dainty cheese or a garland of flowers or two or three early apples. And one day he brought her a young calf, a gilded tankard, and a nest of mountain birds. The simple girl, that knew nothing of lovers' tricks and wiles, accepts the gifts with joy; for now she herself had something to give Daphnis.

And thus (for Daphnis too must then know the works of love) one day there arises between him and Dorco a strife and contention of beauty, and the judge was Chloe, and the prize to kiss Chloe. Dorco spoke first: "I, sweet girl, am taller than Daphnis, and an oxherd. He is but a goatherd, and therefore, as goats are of less account then oxen, so much the worser man. I am as white as milk, and my hair as ruddy as the fields before harvest, and what is more, I had a mother, not a beast, to my nurse. But this fellow is of little stature; he has no more beard than a woman, and is as black as a wolf. Moreover he tends he-goats, as any may know by his rankness. And he's so poor that he could not keep a dog. And if what they say is true, that he was suckled and nursed up by a she-goat, he is every whit as much a kid as any in these fields."

This and the like said Dorco, when Daphnis began thus: "As for me, my foster-mother was a goat, and so was Jove's; and if I tend he-goats, yet are they finer than this fellow's cows; and I carry no taint of them neither, for even Pan himself, for all he is more goat then man, is as sweet company as can be. And as for my living, I have plenty cheese and rye-bread to eat, and good store of white wine to drink, and indeed all that makes a rustic rich is ready to my hand. If I have no beard to my chin, neither has Bacchus; if I am black, so is the hyacinth; and yet Bacchus is better than a Satyr and the hyacinth than a lily. But this man, look you, is red as a fox, bearded as a goat, and white and pale as a city wench. And if kissing is toward, you may come at my lips, but his kiss is a thing of hairs and bristles. And lastly, sweet girl, I pray you remember

that you too had a mother of the flock, and yet you are of sweet and beautiful aspect."

This said, Chloe tarried no longer, but what with his praise of her beauty and her long desiring to kiss him, she started up and gave him a kiss; and though it were the kiss of a novice, 'twas enough to heat and inflame a lover's heart. With that, Dorco in an agony betakes himself off to seek other means to win his end. But Daphnis, more like one that is bitten than kissed, was suddenly downcast and sad. He went often cold, and laid hand to his panting heart. He was fain to look upon Chloe, and yet looking was all on a blush. Then too for the first time he marvelled at her hair golden as fire, and her eyes great and gentle like the kine's, and bethought him that her face was truly as white as the milk of his goats. Indeed 'twas as if hitherto he had no eyes. And he would none of his meat but a taste in the mouth, nor yet of his drink, if drink he must, save so much as to wet his lips. He that prattled aforetime like a locust, opened not his mouth, he that used to be as resty and gadabout as a goat, sate ever still. His flock was neglected, his pipe flung aside, his cheeks grew paler than grass in season. For Chloe only he found his tongue.

And if ever she left him alone, he fell to mutter with himself such fancies as these: "Whither in the name of the Nymphs will that kiss of Chloe drive me? Her lips are softer than roses, and her mouth sweeter than the honeycombs, but her kiss stings sharper than a bee. I have often kissed the young kids, I have kissed a pretty whippet and that calf which Dorco gave me, but this kiss is a new thing. My heart leaps up to my lips, my spirit sparkles and my soul melts, and yet I am mad to kiss her again. Oh what a mischievous victory is this! Oh what a strange disease, whose very name I know not! Did Chloe take poison before she kissed me? How then is she not dead? How sweetly sing the nightingales, while my pipe is silent! How wantonly the kids skip, and I lie still upon the ground! How sweetly do the flowers grow, and I neglect to make garlands! So it is, the violet and the hyacinth flourish, but alas! Daphnis, Daphnis withers. And will it come at length to this, that Dorco shall appear hereafter handsomer then I?"

These passions and complaints the good Daphnis felt and murmured to himself, as now first beginning to taste of the works and language of love. But Dorco, the herdsman that loved Chloe, waiting till Dryas was planting the scions of his vines near by, came to him with certain fine cheeses and presented him withal, as one who had long been his acquaintance and friend when he himself tended cattle. And taking his rise from thence, he cast in words about the marrying of Chloe, and, if he might have her to his wife, promised many and great gifts according to the estate of herdsmen: a yoke of oxen for the plough, four hives of bees, fifty choice young apple-trees, a good bull-hide to make shoes, every year a weaned calf. So that it wanted but a little that allured by these gifts Dryas did not

promise Chloe. But when he had recollected himself and found the maid deserved a better husband, and likewise that he had reason to fear, lest at any time, being deprehended to have given her to a clown, he should fall into a mischief from which he could no way then escape, he desires to be excused, denies the marriage, rejects the gifts.

But Dorco, falling again from his hope and losing his good cheeses, resolves with himself to lay his clutches upon Chloe if ever he could catch her alone. And having observed that by turns one day Daphnis, the next the girl, drove the flocks to watering, he practised a trick not unbecoming one that tended a herd of cattle. He took the skin of a huge wolf, which formerly a bull fighting for the herd had killed with his horns, and flung it o'er his back, and it dangled down to his feet; so that the fore-feet were drawn on his hands, the hinder over his thighs to his heels, and the gaping of the mouth covered his head like the helmet of an armed man. When he was got into this lycanthropy as well as possibly he could, he makes to the fountain where the flocks after their feeding used to drink. But that fountain lay in a bottom, and about it all the place was rough with bushes, thorns, brakes, thistles, and the brush juniper, so that indeed a true wolf might very well lie lurking there.

Therefore, when he had hid himself, he waited the time when the cattle were driven thither to drink, and conceived no small hope that in that habit he should affray and so snap the poor Chloe. After a while she left Daphnis shaking down green leaves for the kids, and drove the flocks down to the fountain. But the flockdogs of the sheep and the goats, following Chloe and (so busy upon the scent are dogs wont to be) catching Dorco in the act to go to set upon the girl, barked furiously and made at him as at a wolf, and before he could wholly rise from the lurk because of the sudden consternation, were all about the wolf-Dorco and biting at his skin. However, fearing lest he should be manifestly discovered, blamed, and shamed, guarding himself as he could with the skin he lay close and still in the thicket. But when Chloe was feared at the first sight and cried out to Daphnis for help, the dogs soon tore his vizard off, tattered the skin, and bit him soundly. Then he roared and cried out amain, and begged for help of Chloe and of Daphnis who was now come up. They rated off the dogs with their usual known recalls, and quickly made them quiet, and they led Dorco, who was torn in the shoulder and the thigh, to the fountain; and where they found the dogs had left the print of their teeth, there they gently washed, and chawing in their mouths the green rine of the elm, applied it softly to his wounds.

Now because of their unskilfulness in amorous adventures, they thought Dorco's disguising and hiding of himself was nothing else but a pastoral prank, and were not at all moved at it. But endeavoring rather to cheer him, and leading him by the hand some part of his way, they bid him farewell and dismissed him. Thus came Dorco out of great danger, and

he that was saved from the jaws, not of the wolf in the adage, but of the dog, went home and dressed his wounds. But Daphnis and Chloe had much ado to get together, before it was late in the evening, their scattered straggling sheep and goats. For they were terrified with the wolfskin and the fierce barking and baying of the dogs, and some ran up the steep crags, some ran on rucks and hurried down to the seashore, although they were taught not only to obey the voice and be quieted by the pipe, but to be driven up together even by the clapping of the hands. But fear had cast in an oblivion of all, so that at length with much stir, following their steps like hares by the foot, they drave them home to their own folds.

That night alone Daphnis and Chloe slept soundly, and found that weariness was some kind of remedy for the passion of love. But as soon as the day appeared they fell again to these fits. When they saw one another they were passing joyful, and sad if it chanced that they were parted. They desired, and yet they knew not what they would have. Only this one thing they knew, that kissing had destroyed Daphnis and bathing had undone Chloe.

Now besides this, the season of the year inflamed and burnt them. For now the cooler spring was ended and the summer was come on, and all things were got to their highest flourishing, the trees with their fruits, the fields with standing corn. Sweet then was the singing of the grasshoppers, sweet was the odour of the fruits, and not unpleasant the very blating of the sheep. A man would have thought that the very rivers, by their gentle gliding away, did sing; and that the softer gales of wind did play and whistle on the pines; that the apples, as languishing with love, fell down upon the ground; and that the Sun, as a lover of beauty unveiled, did strive to undress and turn the rurals all naked. By all these was Daphnis inflamed, and therefore often he goes to the rivers and brooks, there to bathe and cool himself, or to chase the fish that went to and fro in the water. And often he drinks of the clear purls, as thinking by that to quench his inward caum and scorching.

When Chloe had milked the sheep and most of the goats and had spent much time and labor (because the flies were importune and vexatious, and would sting if one chased them) to curdle and press the milk into cheeses, she would wash herself and crown her head with pine-twigs, and when she had girt her fawnskin about her, take her piggin and with wine and milk make a sillibub for her dear Daphnis and herself.

When it grew towards noon they would fall to their catching of one another by their eyes. For Chloe, seeing Daphnis naked, was all eyes for his beauty to view it every whit; and therefore could not choose but melt, as being not able to find in him the least moment to dislike or blame. Daphnis again, if he saw Chloe, in her fawnskin and her pine coronet, give him the sillibub to drink, thought he saw one of the Nymphs

of the holy cave. Therefore taking off her pine and kissing it o'er and o'er, he would put it on his own head; and Chloe, when he was naked and bathing, would in her turn take up his vest, and when she kissed it, put it on upon herself. Sometimes now they flung apples at one another, and dressed and distinguished one another's hair into curious trammels and locks. And Chloe likened Daphnis his hair to the myrtle because it was black; Daphnis, again, because her face was white and ruddy, compared it to the fairest apple. He taught her too to play on the pipe, and always when she began to blow would catch the pipe away from her lips and run it presently o'er with his. He seemed to teach her when she was out, but with that specious pretext, by the pipe, he kissed Chloe.

But it happened, when he played on his pipe at noon and the cattle took shade, that Chloe fell unawares asleep. Daphnis observed it and laid down his pipe, and without any shame or fear was bold to view her, all over and every limb, insatiably; and withal spoke softly thus: "What sweet eyes are those that sleep! How sweetly breathes that rosy mouth! The apples smell not like to it, nor the flowery lawns and thickets. But I am afraid to kiss her. For her kiss stings to my heart and makes me mad like new honey. Besides, I fear lest a kiss should chance to wake her. Oh the prating grasshoppers! they make a noise to break her sleep. And the goats beside are fighting, and they clatter with their horns. Oh the wolves, worse dastards than the foxes, that they have not ravished them away!"

While he was muttering this passion, a grasshopper that fled from a swallow took sanctuary in Chloe's bosom. And the pursuer could not take her, but her wing by reason of her close pursuit slapped the girl upon the cheek. And she not knowing what was done cried out, and started from her sleep. But when she saw the swallow flying near by and Daphnis laughing at her fear, she began to give it over and rub her eyes that yet would be sleeping. The grasshopper sang out of her bosom, as if her suppliant were now giving thanks for the protection. Therefore Chloe again squeaked out; but Daphnis could not hold laughing, nor pass the opportunity to put his hand into her bosom and draw forth friend Grasshopper, which still did sing even in his hand. When Chloe saw it she was pleased and kissed it, and took and put it in her bosom again, and it prattled all the way.

But besides these the stock-dove did delight them too, and sang from the woods her country song. But Chloe, desiring to know, asked Daphnis what that complaint of the stock-dove meant. And he told her the tradition of the ancient shepherds: "There was once, maiden, a very fair maid who kept many cattle in the woods. She was skilful in music, and her herds were so taken with her voice and pipe, that they needed not the discipline of the staff or goad, but sitting under a pine and wearing a coronet of the same she would sing of Pan and the Pine, and her cows would

never wander out of her voice. There was a youth that kept his herd not far off, and he also was fair and musical, but as he tried with all his skill to emulate her notes and tones, he played a louder strain as a male, and yet sweet as being young, and so allured from the maid's herd eight of her best cows to his own. She took it ill that her herd was so diminished and in very deep disdain that she was his inferior at the art, and presently prayed to the Gods that she might be transformed to a bird before she did return home. The Gods consent, and turned her thus into a mountain bird, because the maid did haunt there, and musical, as she had been. And singing still to this day she publishes her heavy chance and demands her truant cows again."

Such delights and pleasures as these the summer-time entertained them withal. But when autumn was coming in and the grapes were ripening, some Tyrian pirates, in a Carian vessel lest perchance they should seem to be barbarians, sailed up to the fields, and coming ashore armed with swords and half-corslets, fell to rifle, plunder, and carry away all that came to hand, the fragrant wines, great store of grain, honey in the comb. Some oxen too they drove away from Dorco's herd, and took Daphnis as he wandered by the sea. For Chloe, as a maid, was fearful of the fierce and surly shepherds, and therefore, till it was somewhat later, drove not out the flocks of Dryas. And when they saw the young man was proper and handsome and of a higher price then any of their other prey, they thought it not worth their staying longer about the goats or other fields, and hauled him aboard lamenting and not knowing what to do, and calling loud and often on the name of Chloe. And so, waiting only till they had loosed from the shore and cast in their oars, they made in haste away to sea.

Meanwhile Chloe had brought out her sheep, and with her a new pipe that was to be a gift to Daphnis. When Chloe saw the goats in a hurry, and heard Daphnis louder and louder call "Chloe," she presently casts off all care of her flocks, flings the pipe on the ground, and runs amain for help to Dorco. But he, being cruelly wounded by the thieves and breathing yet a little, his blood gushing out, was laid along upon the ground. Yet seeing Chloe, and a little spark of his former love being awakened in him, "Chloe," said he, "I shall now presently die, for alas! those cursed thieves, as I fought for my herd, have killed me like an ox. But do thou preserve Daphnis for thyself, and in their sudden destruction take vengeance on the rogues for me. I have accustomed my herd to follow the sound of a pipe, and to obey the charm of it although they feed a good way off me. Come hither then and take this pipe, and blow that tune which I heretofore taught Daphnis and Daphnis thee. Leave the care of what shall follow to the pipe and to the cows which are yonder. And to thee, Chloe, I give the pipe, this pipe by which I have often conquered many herdsmen, many goatherds. But, for this, come and kiss me, sweet

Chloe, while I am yet awhile alive; and when I am dead, weep a tear or two o'er me, and if thou seest some other tending my herd upon these hills, I pray thee then remember Dorco." Thus spake Dorco and received his last kiss; and together with the kiss and his voice, breathed out his soul.

But Chloe, taking the pipe and putting it to her lips, began to play and whistle as loud as possibly she could. The cows aboard the pirates presently hear and acknowledge the music, and with one bounce and a huge bellowing shoot themselves impetuously into the sea. By that violent bounding on one of her sides the pinnace toppled, and the sea gaping from the bottom by the fall of the cows in, the surges on a sudden return and sink her down and all that were in her, but with unequal hope of escape. For the thieves had their swords on with their scaled and nailed corslets, and greaves up to the middle of their shins. But Daphnis was barefoot because he was tending his flocks in the plain, and half-naked, it being yet the heat of summer. Wherefore they, when they had swom a little while, were carried by their arms to the bottom. Daphnis on the other side, easily got off his clothes, and yet was much puzzled to swim because he had been used before only to the brooks and rivers. But at length, being taught by necessity what was best for him to do, he rushes into the midst of the cows and on his right and left laid hold on two of their horns, and so without trouble or pain was carried between them to the land as if he had driven a chariot. Now an ox or cow swim so well that no man can do the like, and they are exceeded only by water-fowl and fish; nor do they ever drown and perish unless the nails upon their hooves be thorough drenched with wet and fall. Witness to this those several places of the sea to this day called *Bospori,* the trajects or the narrow seas swom over by oxen.

And thus poor Daphnis was preserved, escaping beyond hope two dangers at once, shipwrack and latrociny. When he was out, he found Chloe on the shore laughing and crying; and casting himself into her arms asked her what she meant when she piped and whistled so loud. Then she told him all that had happened, how she scuttled up to Dorco, how the cows had been accustomed, how she was bidden to play on the pipe, and that their friend Dorco was dead; only for shame she told him not of that kiss.

They thought then it was their duty to honor their great benefactor, and therefore they went with his kinsfolk to bury the unfortunate Dorco. They laid good store of earth upon the corse, and on his grave they set abundance of the most fragrant lasting sative plants and flowers, and made a suspension to him of some of the first-fruits of their labor. Besides they poured on the ground a libation of milk, and pressed with their hands the fairest bunches of the grapes, and then broke many shepherd's-pipes o'er him. There were heard miserable groans and bellowings of the

cows and oxen, and together with them certain incomposed cursations and freaks were seen. The cattle amongst themselves (so the goatherds and the shepherds thought) had a kind of lamentation for the death and loss of their keeper.

When the funeral of Dorco was done, Chloe brought Daphnis to the cave of the Nymphs and washed him with her own hands. And she herself, Daphnis then first of all looking and gazing on her, washed her naked limbs before him, her limbs which for their perfect and most excellent beauty needed neither wash nor dress. And when they had done, they gathered of all the flowers of the season to crown the statues of the Nymphs, and hanged up Dorco's charming pipe for an offering in the fane. Then coming away they looked what became of their sheep and goats, and found that they neither fed nor blated, but were all laid upon the ground, peradventure as wanting Daphnis and Chloe that had been so long out of their sight. Certainly when they appeared and had called and whistled as they were wont, the sheep rose up presently and fell to feed, and the mantling goats skipped and leapt as rejoicing at the safety of their familiar goatherd.

But Daphnis for his life could not be merry, because he had seen Chloe naked and that beauty which before was not unveiled. His heart ached as though it were gnawed with a secret poison, insomuch that sometimes he puffed and blowed thick and short as if somebody had been in a close pursuit of him, sometimes again he breathed so faintly as if his breath had bin quite spent in the late incursions. That washing seemed to him more dangerous and formidable than the sea, and he thought his life was still in the hands and at the dispose of the Tyrian pirates, as being a young rustic and yet unskilled in the assassinations and robberies of Love.

The Second Book

The autumn now being grown to its height and the vintage at hand, every rural began to stir and be busy in the fields, some to repair the wine presses, some to scour the tuns and hogsheads; others were making baskets, skeps, and panniers, and others providing little hooks to catch and cut the bunches of the grapes. Here one was looking busily about to find a stone that would serve him to bruise the stones of grapes, there another furnishing himself with dry willow-wood brayed in a mortar, to carry away the must in the night with light before him. Wherefore Daphnis and Chloe for this time laid aside the care of the flocks, and put their helping hands to the work. Daphnis in his basket carried grapes, cast them into the press and trod them there, and then anon tunned the wine into the butts. Chloe dressed meat for the vintagers and served them with drink of the old wine, or gathered grapes of the lower vines. For all the vines about Lesbos, being neither high-grown nor propped with

trees, incline themselves and protend their palmits towards the ground, and creep like the ivy; so that indeed a very infant, if that his hands be loose from his swathes, may easily reach and pull a bunch.

Now as they were wont in the feast of Bacchus and the solemnisation of the birth of wine, the women that came from the neighboring fields to help, cast their eyes all upon Daphnis, gave him prick and praise for beauty, and said he was like to Bacchus himself. And now and then one of the bolder strapping girls would catch him in her arms and kiss him. Those wanton praises and expressions did animate the modest youth, but vexed and grieved the poor Chloe.

But the men that were treading in the press cast out various voices upon Chloe, and leapt wildly before her like so many Satyrs before a young Bacchant, and wished that they themselves were sheep, that such a shepherdess might tend them. And thus the girl in her turn was pleased, and Daphnis stung with pain. But they wished the vintage might soon be done that they might return to their haunts in the fields, that instead of that wild untuned noise of the clowns they might hear again the sweet pipe or the blating of the cattle.

And when after a few days the grapes were gathered and the must tunned into the vessels, and there needed no longer many hands to help, they drove again their flocks to the plain, and with great joy and exultation worshipped and adored the Nymphs, offering to them the first-fruits of the vintage, clusters hanging on their branches. Nor did they in former time with negligence ever pass by the Nymphs, but always when they came forth to feed would sit them down reverentially in the cave, and when they went home would first adore and beg their grace, and brought to them always something, either a flower or an apple or an apronful of green leaves or a sacrifice of milk. And for this they afterwards received no small rewards and favors from the Goddesses. And now, like dogs let slip, as the saying is, they skip and dance and sing and pipe, and wrestle playfully with their flocks.

While they thus delight themselves, there comes up to them an old man, clad in his rug and mantle of skins, his carbatins or clouted shoes, his scrip hanging at his back, and that indeed a very old one. When he was sate down by them, thus he spoke and told his story: "I, my children, am that old Philetas who have often sung to these Nymphs and often piped to yonder Pan, and have led many a herd by the art of music alone. And I come to shew you what I have seen and to tell you what I have heard. I have a garden which my own hands and labour planted, and ever since by my old age I gave over fields and herds, to dress and trim it has been my care and entertainment. What flowers or fruits the season of the year teems, there they are at every season. In the spring there are roses and lilies, the hyacinths and both the forms of violets; in the summer, poppies, pears, and all sorts of apples. And now in the autumn, vines and figtrees,

pomegranates, and the green myrtles. Into this garden flocks of birds come every morning, some to feed, some to sing. For it is thick, opacous, and shady, and watered all by three fountains; and if you took the wall away you would think you saw a wood.

"As I went in there to-day about noon, a boy appeared in the pomegranate and myrtle grove, with myrtles and pomegranates in his hand; white as milk, and his hair shining with the glance of fire; clean and bright as if he had newly washed himself. Naked he was, alone he was; he played and wantoned it about, and culled and pulled, as if it had bin his own garden. Therefore I ran at him as fast as I could, thinking to get him in my clutches. For indeed I was afraid lest by that wanton, untoward, malapert ramping and hoity-toity which he kept in the grove, he would at length break my pomegranates and myrtles. But he, with a soft and easy sleight, as he listed, gave me the slip, sometimes running under roses, sometimes hiding himself in the poppies, like a cunning, huddling chick of a partridge. I have often had enough to do to run after the sucking kids, and often tired myself off my legs to catch a giddy young calf; but this was a cunning piece and a thing that could not be catched.

"Being then wearied, as an old man, and leaning upon my staff, and withal looking to him lest he should escape away, I asked what neighbour's child he was, and what he meant to rob another man's orchard so. But he answered me not a word, but coming nearer, laughed most sweetly and flung the myrtle-berries at me, and pleased me so, I know not how, that all my anger vanished quite. I asked him therefore that he would give himself without fear into my hands, and swore to him by the myrtles that I would not only send him away with apples and pomegranates to boot, but give him leave whensoever he pleased to pull the finest fruits and flowers, if he would but give me one kiss.

"With that, setting up a loud laughter, he sent forth a voice such as neither the swallow nor the nightingale has, nor yet the swan when he is grown old like to me: 'Philetas,' said he, 'I grudge not at all to give thee a kiss; for it is more pleasure for me to be kissed than for thee to be young again. But consider with thyself whether such a gift as that be of use to thy age. For thy old age cannot help thee that thou shalt not follow me, after that one kiss. But I cannot be taken, though a hawk or an eagle or any other swifter bird were flown at me. I am not a boy though I seem to be so, but am older then Saturn and all this universe. I know that when thou wast yet a boy thou didst keep a great herd on yonder water-meadow; and I was present to thee when under those oak-trees thou didst sing and play on the pipe for the dear love of Amaryllis. But thou didst not see me although I stood close by the maid. It was I that gave her thee in marriage, and thou hast had sons by her, jolly herdsmen and husbandmen. And now I take care of Daphnis and Chloe; and when I have brought them together in the morning, I come hither to

thy garden and take my pleasure among these groves and flowers of thine, and wash myself also in these fountains. And this is the cause why thy roses, violets, lilies, hyacinths, and poppies, all thy flowers and thy plants, are still so fair and beautiful, because they are watered with my wash. Cast thy eyes round about, and look whether there be any one stem of a flower, any twig of a tree, broken, whether any of thy fruits be pulled or any flower trodden down, whether any fountain be troubled and mudded; and rejoice, Philetas, that thou alone of all mortals hast seen this boy in thy old age.'

"This said, the sweet boy sprang into the myrtle grove, and like a young nightingale, from bough to bough under the green leaves, skipped to the top of the myrtles. Then I saw his wings hanging at his shoulders, and at his back between his wings a little bow with darts; and since that moment never saw either them or him any more. If therefore I wear not now these gray hairs of mine in vain, and by my age have not got a trivial mind, you two, O Daphnis and Chloe, are destined to Love, and Love himself takes care of you."

With this they were both hugely delighted; and thought they heard a tale, not a true discourse, and therefore they would ask him questions: "And what is Love? is he a boy or is he a bird? and what can he do I pray you, gaffer?" Therefore again thus Philetas: "Love, my children, is a God, a young youth and very fair, and winged to fly. And therefore he delights in youth, follows beauty, and gives our fantasy her wings. His power's so vast that that of Jove is not so great. He governs in the elements, rules in the stars, and domineers even o'er the Gods that are his peers. Nay, you have not such dominion o'er your sheep and goats. All flowers are the work of Love. Those plants are his creations and poems. By him it is that the rivers flow, and by him the winds blow. I have known a bull that has been in love and run bellowing through the meadows as if he had been stung by a breese, a he-goat too so in love with a virgin-she that he has followed her up and down through the woods, through the lawns.

"And I myself once was young, and fell in love with Amaryllis, and forgot to eat my meat and drink my drink, and never could compose to sleep. My panting heart was very sad and anxious, and my body shook with cold. I cried out oft, as if I had bin thwacked and basted back and sides; and then again was still and mute, as if I had layen among the dead. I cast myself into the rivers as if I had bin all on a fire. I called on Pan that he would help me, as having sometimes bin himself catched with the love of peevish Pitys. I praised Echo that with kindness she restored and trebled to me the dear name of Amaryllis. I broke my pipes because they could delight the kine, but could not draw me Amaryllis. For there is no medicine for love, neither meat, nor drink, nor any charm, but only kissing and embracing and lying side by side."

Philetas, when he had thus instructed the unskilful lovers, and was presented with certain cheeses and a young goat of the first horns, went his way. But when they were alone, having then first heard of the name of Love, their minds were struck with a kind of madness, and returning home with the fall of night, they began each to compare those things which they had suffered in themselves with the doctrine of Philetas concerning lovers and love: "The lover has his grief and sadness, and we have had our share of that. They are languishing and careless in just such things as we. They cannot sleep, and we still watch for the early day. They think they are burnt, and we too are afire. They desire nothing more than to see one another, and for that cause we pray the day to come quickly. This undoubtedly is love, and we, it seems, are in love without knowing whether or no this be love or ourself a lover. And so if we ask why we have this grief and why this seeking each after the other, the answer is clear: Philetas did not lie a tittle. That boy in the garden was seen too by our fathers Lamo and Dryas in that dream, and 'twas he that commanded us to the field. How is it possible for one to catch him? He's small and slim, and so will slip and steal away. And how should one escape and get away from him by flight? He has wings to overtake us. We must fly to the Nymphs our patronesses; but Pan, alas! did not help his servant Philetas when he was mad on Amaryllis. Therefore those remedies which he taught us are before all things to be tried, kissing, embracing, and lying together on the ground. It's cold indeed, but after Philetas we'll endure it."

Of this sort then was their nocturnal schooling. When it was day and their flocks were driven to the field, they ran, as soon as they saw one another, to kiss and embrace, which before they never did. Yet of that third remedy which the old Philetas taught, they durst not make experiment; for that was not only an enterprise too bold for maids, but too high for young goatherds. Therefore still, as before, came night without sleep, and with remembrance of what was done and with complaint of what was not: "We have kissed one another and are never the better; we have clipped and embraced, and that's as good as nothing too. Therefore to lie together is certainly the only remaining remedy of love. That must be tried by all means. There's something in it, without doubt, more efficacious than in a kiss."

While they indulged these kind of thoughts, they had, as it was like, their amorous dreams, kissing and clipping; and what they did not in the day, that they acted in the night, and lay together. But the next day they rose up still the more possessed, and drive their flocks with a whistling to the fields, hasting to their kisses again, and when they saw one another, smiling sweetly ran together. Kisses passed, embraces passed, but that third remedy was slow to come; for Daphnis durst not mention it, and Chloe too would not begin, till at length even by chance they made this essay of it:

They sate both close together upon the trunk of an old oak, and having tasted the sweetness of kisses they were ingulfed insatiably in pleasure, and there arose a mutual contention and striving with their clasping arms which made a close compression of their lips. And when Daphnis hugged her to him with a more violent desire, it came about that Chloe inclined a little on her side, and Daphnis, following his kiss, fell beside her. And remembering that they had an image of this in their dreams the night before, they lay a long while clinging together. But being ignorant as yet, and thinking that this was the end of love, they parted, most part of the day spent in vain, and drove their flocks home from the fields with a kind of hate to the oppression of the night. And perchance something that was real had then bin done, but that this tumult and noise filled all that rural tract:

Some young gallants of Methymna, thinking to keep the vintage holy-days and choosing to take the pleasure abroad, drew a small vessel into the water, and putting in their own domestic servants to row, sailed about those pleasant farms of Mytilene that were near by the seashore. For the maritim coast has many good and safe harbors, and all along is adorned with many stately buildings. There are besides many baths, gardens, and groves, these by art, those by nature, all brave for a man to take his pastime there.

The ship therefore passing along and from time to time putting in at the bays, they did no harm or injury to any, but recreated themselves with divers pleasures, sometimes with angles, rods, and lines taking fish from this or the other prominent rock, sometimes with dogs or toils hunting the hares that fled from the noise of the vineyards; then anon they would go a fowling, and take the wild-goose, duck, and mallard, and the bustard of the field; and so by their pleasure furnished themselves with a plenteous table. If they needed anything else they paid the villagers above the price. But there was nothing else wanting but only bread and wine and house-room. For they thought it unsafe, the autumn now in its declination, to quit the land and lie all night aboard at sea; and therefore drew the vessel ashore for fear of a tempestuous night.

Now it happened that a country fellow wanting a rope, his own being broke, to haul up the stone wherewith he was grinding grape-stones, sneaked down to the sea, and finding the ship with nobody in her, loosed the cable that held her and brought it away to serve his business. In the morning the young men of Methymna began to enquire after the rope, and (nobody owning the thievery) when they had a little blamed the unkindness and injury of their hosts, they loosed from thence, and sailing on thirty furlongs arrived at the fields of Daphnis and Chloe, those fields seeming the likeliest for hunting the hare. Therefore being destitute of a rope to use for their cable, they made a withe of green and long sallow-twigs, and with that tied her by her stern to the shore. Then slipping their

dogs to hunt, they cast their toils in those paths that seemed fittest for game.

The deep-mouthed dogs opened loud, and running about with much barking, scared the goats, that all hurried down from the mountains towards the sea; and finding nothing there in the sand to eat, coming up to that ship some of the bolder mischievous goats gnawed in pieces the green sallow-withe that made her fast. At the same moment there began to be a bluster at sea, the wind blowing from the mountains. On a sudden therefore the backwash of the waves set the loose pinnace adrift and carried her off to the main.

As soon as the Methymnaeans heard the news, some of them posted to the sea, some stayed to take up the dogs, all made a hubbub through the fields, and brought the neighboring rurals in. But all was to no purpose; all was lost, all was gone. For the wind freshening, the ship with an irrevocable pernicity and swiftness was carried away.

Therefore the Methymnaeans, having a great loss by this, looked for the goatherd, and lighting on Daphnis, fell to cuff him, and tore off his clothes, and one offered to bind his hands behind him with a dog-slip. But Daphnis, when he was miserably beaten, cried out and implored the help of the country lads, and chiefly of all called for rescue to Lamo and Dryas. They presently came in, and opposed themselves, brawny old fellows and such as by their country labor had hands of steel, and required of the furious youths concerning those things that had happened a fair legal debate and decision. And the others desiring the same thing, they made Philetas the herdsman judge. For he was oldest of all that were there present, and famous for uprightness among the villagers.

The Methymnaeans therefore began first, and laid their accusation against Daphnis, in very short and perspicuous words as before a herdsman-judge: "We came into these fields to hunt. Wherefore with a green sallow-withe we left our ship tied to the shore while our dogs were hunting the grounds. Meanwhile his goats strayed from the mountains down to the sea, gnawed the green cable in pieces, set her at liberty, and let her fly. You saw her tossing in the sea, but with what choice and rich good laden! what fine clothes are lost! what rare harness and ornaments for dogs are there! what a treasury of precious silver! He that had all might easily purchase these fields. For this damage we think it but right and reason to carry him away our captive, him that is such a mischievous goatherd to feed his goats upon those other goats, to wit, the waves of the sea."

This was the accusation of the Methymnaeans. Daphnis on the other side, although his bones were sore with basting, yet seeing his dear Chloe there, set it at naught and spoke thus in his own defence: "I, in keeping my goats, have done my office well. For never so much as one of all the neighbors of the vale has blamed me yet, that any kid or goat of mine has broke into and eaten up his garden or browzed a young or sprout-

ing vine. But those are wicked cursed hunters, and have dogs that have no manners, such as with their furious coursing and most vehement barking have, like wolves, scared my goats and tossed them down from the mountains through the valleys to the sea. But they have eaten the green withe. For they could find nothing else upon the sand, neither arbute, wilding, shrub, nor thyme. But the ship's lost by wind and wave. That's not my goats, but the fault of seas and tempests. But there were rich clothes and silver aboard her. And who that has any wit can believe that a ship that is so richly laden should have nothing for her cable but a withe?"

With that Daphnis began to weep, and made the rustics commiserate him and his cause, so that Philetas the judge called Pan and the Nymphs to witness that neither Daphnis nor his goats had done any wrong, but that it was the wind and sea, and that of those there were other judges. Yet by this sentence Philetas could not persuade and bind the Methymnaeans, but again in a fury they fell to towse Daphnis, and offered to bind him. With which the villagers being moved, fell upon them like flocks of starlings or jackdaws, and carried him away as he was bustling amongst them, never ceasing till with their clubs they had driven them from the ground, and beaten them from their coasts into other fields.

While thus they pursued the Methymnaeans, Chloe had time without disturbance to bring Daphnis to the fountain of the Nymphs, and there to wash his bloody face, and entertain him with bread and cheese out of her own scrip, and (what served to restore him most of all) give him with her soft lips a kiss sweet as honey. For it wanted but a little that then her dear Daphnis had bin slain.

¶ But these commotions could not thus be laid and at an end. For those gallants of Methymna, having been softly and delicately bred, and every man his wounds about him, travelling now by land, with miserable labor and pain got into their own country; and procuring a council to be called, humbly petitioned that their cause might be revenged, without reporting a word of those things which indeed had happened, lest perchance over and above their wounds they should be laughed at for what they had suffered at the hands of clowns; but accused the Mytilenaeans that they had taken their ship and goods in open warfare.

The citizens easily believed their story because they saw they were all wounded, and knowing them to be of the best of their families, thought it just to revenge the injury. And therefore they decreed a war against the Mytilenaeans without denouncing it by any herald, and commanded Bryaxis their general with ten sail to infest the maritim coast of Mytilene. For the winter now approaching, they thought it dangerous to trust a greater squadron at sea.

At dawn of the next day the general sets sail with his soldiers at the oars, and putting to the main comes up to the maritims of Mytilene, and

hostilely invades them, plundering and raping away their flocks, their corn, their wines (the vintage now but lately over), with many of those that were employed in such business. They sailed up, too, to the fields of Daphnis and Chloe, and coming suddenly down upon them, preyed upon all that they could light on.

It happened that Daphnis was not then with his goats, but was gone to the wood, and there was cutting green leaves to give them for fodder in the winter. Therefore, this incursation being seen from the higher ground, he hid himself in an hollow beech-tree. But his Chloe was with her flocks, and the enemies invading her and them, she fled away to the cave of the Nymphs, and begged of the enemies that they would spare her and her flocks for those holy Goddesses' sakes. But that did not help her at all. For the Methymnaeans did not only mock at and rail upon the statues of the Nymphs but drove away her flocks and her before them, thumping her along with their battons as if she had bin a sheep or a goat. But now their ships being laden with all manner of prey, they thought it not convenient to sail any further but rather to make home, for fear of the winter no less than of their enemies. Therefore they sailed back again, and were hard put to it to row because there wanted wind to drive them.

The tumults and hubbubs ceasing, Daphnis came out of the wood into the field they used to feed in, and when he could find neither the goats, the sheep, nor Chloe, but only a deep silence and solitude and the pipe flung away wherewith she entertained herself, setting up a piteous cry and lamenting miserably, sometimes he ran to the oak where they sate, sometimes to the sea to try if there he could set his eyes on her, then to the Nymphs whither she fled when she was taken, and there flinging himself upon the ground began to accuse the Nymphs as her betrayers:

"It was from your statues that Chloe was drawn and ravished away! and how could you endure to see it? she that made the garlands for you, she that every morning poured out before you and sacrificed her first milk, and she whose pipe hangs up there a sweet offering and donary! The wolf indeed has taken from me never a goat, but the enemy has my whole flock together with my sweet companion of the field; and they will kill and slay the sheep and goats, and Chloe now must live in a city. With what face can I now come into the sight of my father and my mother, without my goats, without Chloe, there to stand a quit-work and runaway? For now I have nothing left to feed, and Daphnis is no more a goatherd. Here I'll fling myself on the ground, and there I'll lie expecting my death or else a second war to help me. And dost thou, sweet Chloe, suffer now in thyself heavy things as these? Dost thou remember and think of this field, the Nymphs, and me? Or takest thou some comfort from thy sheep and those goats of mine which are carried away with thee into captivity?"

While he was thus lamenting his condition, by his weeping so much and

the heaviness of his grief he fell into a deep sleep, and those three Nymphs appeared to him, ladies of a tall stature, very fair, half-naked, and barefooted, their hair dishevelled, and in all things like their statues. At first they appeared very much to pity his cause, and then the eldest, to erect him, spoke thus: "Blame not us at all, Daphnis; we have greater care of Chloe then thou thyself hast. We took pity on her when she was yet but an infant, and when she lay in this cave took her ourselves and saw her nursed. She does not at all belong to the fields, nor to the flocks of Dryas. And even now we have provided, as to her, that she shall not be carried a slave to Methymna, nor be any part of the enemies' prey. We have begged of Pan, Pan that stands under yonder pine, whom you have never honoured so much as with flowers, that he would bring back thy Chloe and our votary. For Pan is more accustomed to camps then we are, and leaving the countryside has made many wars; and the Methymnaeans shall find him an infesting enemy. Trouble not thyself any longer, but get thee up and shew thyself to Myrtale and Lamo, who now themselves lie cast on the ground thinking thee too to be part of the rapine. For Chloe shall certainly come to thee to-morrow, accompanied with the sheep and the goats. You shall feed together as before and play together on the pipe. For other things concerning you, Love himself will take the care."

Now when Daphnis had seen and heard these things, he started up out of his sleep, and with tears in his eyes both of pleasure and of grief, adored the statues of the Nymphs, and vowed to sacrifice to them the best of all his she-goats if Chloe should return safe. And running to the pine where the statue of Pan was placed, the head horned, the legs a goat's, one hand holding a pipe, the other a he-goat leaping, that too he adored, and made a vow for the safety of Chloe and promised Pan a he-goat.

Scarce now with the setting of the sun he made a pause of his weeping, his wailing, and his prayers, and taking up the boughs he had cut in the wood, returned to the cottage, comforted Lamo and his household and made them merry, refreshed himself with meat and wine, and fell into a deep sleep; yet not that without tears, praying to see the Nymphs again and calling for an early day, the day that they had promised Chloe.

That night seemed the longest of nights, but in it these wonders were done. The general of the Methymnaeans, when he had borne off to sea about ten furlongs, would refresh his wearied soldiers after the incursion and plunder. Coming up therefore to a promontore which ran into the sea, winding itself into a half-moon within which the sea made a calmer station than in a port — in this place when he had cast anchor (lest the rustics should mischieve him from the land), he permitted them securely to rant and be jovial as in peace. The Methymnaeans, because by this direption they abounded with all things, feasted, caroused, and danced, and celebrated victorials.

But the day being now spent and their mirth protracted to the night, on a sudden all the land seemed to be on a light fire; then anon their ears were struck with an impetuous clattering of oars as if a great navy were a coming. Some cried out the general must arm; some called this and others that; here some thought they were wounded, there others lay like dead men. A man would have thought he had seen a kind of nocturnal battle, when yet there was no enemy there.

The night thus past in these spectres, the day arose far more terrible than the night. For on the horns of all Daphnis his goats there grew up on a sudden the berried ivy, and Chloe's sheep were heard to howl like wolves in the woods. Chloe herself in the midst of her flocks appeared crowned with a most fresh and shady pine. In the sea itself too there happened many wonders, paradoxes, and prodigies. For when they labored to weigh their anchors and be gone, their anchors stuck as fast as the earth; and when they cast their oars to row, they snapped and broke; leaping dolphins with the thumping of their tails loosened the planks of the barges. From that crag which lifted up itself over the promontore, was heard a strange sound of a pipe; yet it was not pleasing as a pipe, but like a trumpet or a terrible cornet, which made them run to their arms and call those enemies whom they saw not at all. Insomuch that they wished it night again, as if they should have a truce by that.

Yet those things which then happened might very well be understood by such as were wise, namely that those spectres, phantasms, and sounds proceeded from Pan, shewing himself angry at the voyagers. Yet the cause they could not conjecture (for nothing sacred to Pan was robbed), until about high noon, their grand captain not without the impulse of some deity fallen into a sleep, Pan himself appeared to him and rated him thus: "O ye most unholy and wickedest of mortals! What made you so bold as madly to attempt and do such outrages as these? You have not only filled with war these fields that are so dear to me, but also you have driven away herds of cattle, flocks of sheep and goats that were my care. Besides, you have taken sacrilegiously from the altars of the Nymphs a maid of whom Love himself will write a story. Nor did you at all revere the Nymphs that looked upon you when you did it, nor yet me whom very you knew to be Pan. Therefore you shall never see Methymna, sailing away with those spoils, nor shall you escape that terrible pipe from the promontore, but I will drown you every man and make you food for the fish, unless thou speedily restore to the Nymphs as well Chloe as Chloe's herds and flocks. Rise therefore and send the maid ashore, send her with all that I command thee; and I shall be as well to thee a convey in thy voyage home as to her a conduct on her way to the fields."

Bryaxis, being astonished at this, started up, and calling together the captains of the ships, commanded that Chloe should be quickly sought for among the captives. They found her presently and brought her before

him; for she sate crowned with the pine. The general, remembering that the pine was the mark and signal distinction which he had in his dream, carried the maid ashore in the admiral with no small observance and ceremonious fear. Now as soon as Chloe was set on shore, the sound of the pipe from the promontore began to be heard again, not martial and terrible as before, but perfectly pastoral such as is used to lead the cattle to feed in the fields. The sheep ran down the scale of the ship, slipping and sliding on their horny hooves; the goats more boldly, for they were used to climb the crags and steeps of the hills. The whole flock encircled Chloe, moving as in a dance about her, and with their skipping and their blating shewed a kind of joyfulness and exultation. But the goats of other goatherds, as also the sheep and the herds, stirred not a foot, but remained still in the holds of the ships as if the music of that pipe did not at all call for them.

When therefore they were all struck with admiration at these things and celebrated the praises of Pan, there were yet seen in both the elements things more wonderful than those before. For the ships of the Methymnaeans before they had weighed their anchors ran amain, and a huge dolphin bouncing still out of the sea went before and led their admiral. On the land a most sweet melodious pipe led the goats and the sheep, and yet nobody saw the piper; only all the cattle went along together and fed rejoicing at his music.

It was now the time of the second pasturing, when Daphnis having spied from a high stand Chloe coming with the flocks, crying out mainly, "O ye Nymphs, O blessed Pan!" made down to the plain, and rushing into the embraces of Chloe, in a swoon fell to the ground. With much ado when he was come to himself with Chloe's kisses and embraces in her close and warm arms, he got to the oak where they were wont, and when he was sate down on the trunk he asked her how she had escaped such a dangerous captivity as that. Then she told him everything one after another; how the fresh and berried ivy appeared on the horns of all the goats, how her sheep howled like wolves, how a pine sprung up upon her head, how all the land seemed on a fire, what horrible fragors and clashings were heard from the sea; with the two tones of that pipe from the crag of the promontore, the one to war, the other to peace, the terrible spectres of the night, how she not knowing her way had for her companion and guide the sweet music of that strange invisible pipe.

Daphnis then acknowledged the vision of the Nymphs and the works of Pan, and storied to her what he himself had seen, and what he had heard, and how when he was ready to die for grief his life was saved by the providence and kindness of the holy Nymphs. And then presently he sent her away to bring Dryas and Lamo and their wives to the sacrifice, and all things necessary for such a devotion to Pan and the Nymphs. In the meantime he catched the fairest of all his she-goats, and when he

had crowned it with ivy in that manner as the whole flock had appeared to the enemy, and had poured milk on the horns, in the name of the Nymphs he struck and killed it, and sacrificed it to them. He hanged it up, took off the skin, consecrated that, and made it an offering.

When Chloe with her company was come, he made a fire, and some of the flesh being boiled and some roasted, he offered the first and chiefest parts of both to the Nymphs, and filling a bowl with new wine, made a libation; then, having made several beds of green leaves, every man gave himself wholly to eating, drinking, and playing; only they looked out now and then lest the irruption of a wolf upon the flocks should chance to do something like an enemy. They sung too certain songs in the praise of the Nymphs, the solemn carmens of the ancient shepherds. All that night they lay in the fields; and the next day they were not unmindful of the wonder-working Pan, but took the he-goat that was captain and leader of the flock, and when they had crowned him with pine-garlands they brought him to the pine, and pouring wine upon his head, with benedictions and thankful praise they sacrificed him to Pan the preserver. Then hanging him up they flayed him, and the flesh, part roasted, part boiled, they set upon banks of green leaves hard by in the meadow. The skin, horns and all, they pegged to the pine close to the statue, to a pastoral God a pastoral offering. They offered too the first carvings of the flesh, and made him a libation with a greater bowl than to the Nymphs. Chloe sang and Daphnis played upon the pipe.

These rites performed, they sate down and fell to feast. And it happened that Philetas the herdsman came up to them bringing with him certain garlands to honor Pan, together with grapes hanging still among the leaves and branches. His youngest son Tityrus came along with him, a ruddy lad, grey-eyed and fair-skinned, stout and fierce, and of a nimble bounding pace like a kid. When they saw what the intention of the good old Philetas was, they started up, and all together crowned the statue of Pan with garlands, and hanged the palmits with their grapes upon the leaves of the pine; and then they make Philetas sit down to the feast and be their guest, to eat and drink and celebrate. Then, as old men use to do when they are a little whittled with wine, they had various discourses and chats amongst them; how bravely in their youth they had administered the pasturing of their flocks and herds, how in their time they had escaped very many invasions and inroads of pirates and thieves. Here one bragged that he had killed a wolf, here another that he had bin second to Pan alone in the skill and art of piping. And this was the crack of Philetas; and therefore Daphnis and Chloe used all manner of supplications to him, that he would communicate with them that art of piping, and play upon the pipe at the feast of that God whom he knew to delight so much in the pipe.

Philetas promised to do it, although he blamed old age for his short

breath; and so took Daphnis his pipe. But that being too little for so great an art, as being made to be inspirited by the mouth of a boy, he sent his son Tityrus for his own, the cottage lying distance from thence but ten furlongs. Tityrus, flinging off his jacket, ran swift as a hind. But Lamo promised to tell them that tale of the pipe which a Sicilian goatherd, hired by him for a goat and a pipe, had sung to him:

"This pipe was heretofore no organ, but a very fair maid, who had a sweet and musical voice. She fed goats, played together with the Nymphs, and sang as now. Pan, while she in this manner was tending her goats, playing and singing, came to her and endeavoured to persuade her to what he desired, and promised her that he would make all her goats bring forth twins every year. But she disdained and derided his love, and denied to take him to be her sweetheart who was neither perfect man nor perfect goat. Pan follows her with violence and thinks to force her. Syrinx fled Pan and his force. Being now aweary with her flight, she shot herself into a grove of reeds, sunk in the fen, and disappeared. Pan for anger cut up the reeds and finding not the maid there, and then reflecting upon what had happened, joined together unequal quills, because their love was so unequal, and thus invented this organ. So she who then was a fair maid is now become a musical pipe."

Lamo had now done his tale and Philetas praised him for it as one that had told them a story far sweeter than any song, when Tityrus came in and brought his father's pipe, a large organ and made of great quills, and where it was joined together with wax there too it was set and varied with brass. Insomuch that one would have thought that this had bin that very pipe which Pan the inventor made first. When therefore Philetas was got up and had set himself upright on a bench, first he tried the quills whether they sounded clear and sweet; then, finding never a cane was stopped, he played a loud and lusty tune. One would not have thought that he had heard but one pipe, the sound was so high, the consort so full. But by little and little remitting that vehemence, he changed it to a soft and sweeter tone, and displaying all the art of pastoral music, he shewed upon the pipe what notes were fit for the herds of cows and oxen, what agreed with the flocks of goats, what were pleasing to the sheep. The tones for the sheep were soft and sweet, those of the herds were vehement, and for the goats were sharp and shrill. In sum, that single pipe of his expressed even all the shepherd's-pipes.

Therefore the rest in deep silence sate still, delighted and charmed with that music. But Dryas, rising and bidding him strike up a Dionysiac tune, fell to dance before them the dance of the wine-press. And now he acted to the life the cutting and gathering of the grapes, now the carrying of the baskets, then the treading of the grapes in the press, then presently the tunning of the wine into the butts, and then again their joyful and hearty carousing the must. All these things he represented so aptly and clearly

in his dancing, that they all thought they verily saw before their face the vines, the grapes, the press, the butts, and that Dryas did drink indeed.

This third old man when he had pleased them so well with his dance, embraced and kissed Daphnis and Chloe. Therefore they two, rising quickly, fell to dancing Lamo's tale. Daphnis played Pan, and Chloe Syrinx. He woos and prays to persuade and win her; she shews her disdain, laughs at his love, and flies him. Daphnis follows as to force her, and running on his tiptoes, imitates the hooves of Pan. Chloe on the other side, acts Syrinx wearied with her flight, and throws herself into the wood as she had done into the fen. But Daphnis, catching up that great pipe of Philetas, plays at first something that was doleful and bewailing, as a lover, then something that made love and was persuasive to relenting, then a recall from the wood, as from one that dearly sought her. Insomuch that Philetas, struck with admiration and joy, could not hold from leaping up and kissing Daphnis. Then he gave him that pipe of his and commanded him to leave it to a successor like himself. Daphnis hanged up his own small one to Pan, and when he had kissed his Chloe, as returning from a true unfeigned flight, he began to drive home his flocks (for night was fallen), piping all the way. Chloe too by the same music gathered together her flocks and drove them home, the goats stritting along with the sheep, and Daphnis walking close by Chloe. Thus till it was night they filled themselves the one with the other, and agreed to drive out their flocks sooner the next morning.

And so they did. For as soon as it was day they went out to pasture, and when they had first saluted the Nymphs and then Pan, afterwards sitting down under the oak they had the music of the pipe. After that, they kissed, embraced, and hugged one another, and lay down together on the ground; and so rose up again. Nor were they incurious of their meat, and for their drink they drank wine mingled with milk. With all which incentives being more heated and made more lively and forward, they practised between them an amorous controversy about their love to one another, and by little and little came to bind themselves by the faith of oaths. For Daphnis coming up to the pine, swore by Pan that he would not live alone in this world without Chloe so much as the space of one day. And Chloe swore in the cave of the Nymphs that she would have the same death and life with Daphnis.

Yet such was the simplicity of Chloe, as being but a girl, that when she came out of the cave she demanded another oath of Daphnis. "Daphnis," quoth she, "Pan is a wanton, faithless God; for he loved Pitys, he loved Syrinx too. Besides, he never ceases to trouble and vex the Dryads and to solicit the Nymphs the president Goddesses of our flocks. Therefore he, if by thy faithlessness shouldst neglect him, would not take care to punish thee, although thou shouldst go to more maids than there are quills in that pipe. But do thou swear to me by this flock of goats, and by that

goat which was thy nurse, that thou wilt never forsake Chloe so long as she is faithful to thee; and when she is false and injurious to thee and the Nymphs, then fly her, then hate her, and kill her like a wolf." Daphnis was pleased with this pretty jealousy, and standing in the midst of his flocks, with one hand laying hold on a she-goat and the other on a he, swore that he would love Chloe that loved him, and that if she preferred any other to Daphnis, then he would slay, not her, but him that she preferred. Of this Chloe was glad, and believed him as a poor harmless maid, one that was bred a shepherdess and thought that flocks of sheep and goats were proper deities of the shepherds.

The Third Book

But the Mytilenaeans, when they heard of the expedition of those ten ships, and some of the countrymen coming up from the farms had told them what a plundering and rapine there had bin, thought it too disgraceful to be borne, and therefore decreed to raise arms against Methymna with all speed. And having chosen out three thousand targetteers and five hundred horse, they sent away their general Hippasus by land, not daring to trust the sea in winter.

He did not as he marched depopulate the fields of Methymna, nor did he rob the farms of the husbandmen or the pastures of the shepherds, counting such actions as those to suit better with a larron than the grand captain of an army; but hasted up to the town itself to surprise it. But while he was yet an hundred furlongs off from the town an herald met him with articles. For after that the Methymnaeans were informed by the captives that the Mytilenaeans knew nothing of those things that had happened, and that ploughmen and shepherds provoked by the young gentlemen were they that were the causes of it all, it repented them of that expedition of Bryaxis against a neighbouring city, as of an action more precipitant than moderate and wise; and they were eager to return all the prey and spoil that was taken and carried away, and to have commerce and trade securely with them by land and by sea.

Therefore Hippasus dispatches away that herald to Mytilene, although he had bin created the general of the war and so had power to sign as he listed; and pitching his camp about ten furlongs from Methymna, there he attended mandates from the city. Two days after, the messenger returned, and brought a command that they should receive the plundered goods and all the captives, and march home without doing the least harm, because Methymna, when war or peace were offered to be chosen, found peace to be more profitable. And this quarrel betwixt Methymna and Mytilene, which was of an unexpected beginning and end, was thus taken up and composed.

And now winter was come on, a winter more bitter than war to Daphnis

and Chloe. For on a sudden there fell a great snow, which blinded all the paths, stopped up all the ways, and shut up all the shepherds and husbandmen. The torrents rushed down in flood, and the lakes were frozen and glazed with crystal. The hedges and trees looked as if they had bin breaking down. All the ground was hoodwinked up but that which lay upon the fountains and the rills. And therefore no man drove out his flocks to pasture or did so much as come out of the door, but about the cock's crowing made their fires nose-high, and some spun flax, some wove tarpaulin for the sea, others with all their sophistry made gins and nets and traps for birds. At that time their care was employed about the oxen and cows that were foddered with chaff in the stalls, about the goats and about the sheep which fed on green leaves in the sheepcotes and the folds, or else about fatting their hogs in the sties with acorns and other mast.

When all was thus taken up perforce with their domestic affairs, the other husbandmen and shepherds were very jovial and merry, as being for a while discharged of their labors and able to have their breakfast in the morning after sleeping long winter nights; so that the winter was to them more pleasant than the summer, the autumn, or the very spring. But Chloe and Daphnis, when they remembered what a sweet conversation they had held before, how they had kissed, how they had embraced and hugged one another, how they had lived at a common scrip, all which were now as pleasures lost, now they had long and sleepless nights, now they had sad and pensive days, and desired nothing so much as a quick return of the spring, to become their regeneration and return from death.

Besides this, it was their grief and complaint if but a scrip came to their hands out of which they had eaten together, or a sillibub-piggin out of which they had used both to drink, or if they chanced to see a pipe laid aside and neglected such as had bin not long before a lover's gift from one to the other. And therefore they prayed severally to Pan and the Nymphs that they would deliver them from these as from the other evils and miseries, and shew to them and their flocks the Sun again. And while they prayed, they laboured too and cast about to find a way by which they might come to see one another. Poor Chloe was void of all counsel and had no device nor plot. For the old woman her reputed mother was by her continually, and taught her to card the fine wool and twirl the spindle, or else was still a clocking for her, and ever and anon casting in words and twattling to her about her marriage. But Daphnis, who was now at leisure enough and was of a more projecting wit than a maid, devised this sophism to see her:

Before Dryas his cottage, and indeed under the very cottage itself, there grew two tall myrtles and an ivy-bush. The myrtles stood not far off from one another, and between them the ivy ran, and so that it made a kind of arbor by clasping the arms about them both and by the order, the thickness, and interweaving of its branches and leaves, many and great

clusters of berries hanging from it like those of the vines from the palmits. And therefore it was, that great store of winter birds haunted the bush, for want, it seems, of food abroad, many blackbirds, many thrushes, stock-doves and starlings, with other birds that feed on berries.

Under pretext of birding there, Daphnis came out, his scrip furnished indeed with sweet country dainties, but bringing with him, to persuade and affirm his meaning, snares and lime-twigs for the purpose. The place lay off but ten furlongs, and yet the snow that lay unmelted found him somewhat to do to pass through it. But all things are pervious to love, even fire, water, and Scythian snows. Therefore plodding through, he came up to the cottage, and when he had shook off the snow from his thighs, he set his snares and pricked his lime-twigs. Then he sate down and waited for Chloe and the birds.

There flew to the bushes many birds, and a sufficient number was taken to busy Daphnis a thousand ways, in running up and down, in gathering, killing, and depluming his game. But nobody stirred out of the cottage, not a man or woman to be seen, not so much as a hen at the door, but all were shut up in the warm house; so that poor Daphnis knew not what in the world to do, but was at a stand as if his luck had bin less fair than fowl. And assuredly he would have ventured to intrude himself, if he could but have found out some specious cause and plausible enough; and so deliberated with himself what was the likeliest to be said: "I'll say I came to fetch fire; And was there no neighbor, they will say, within a furlong, let alone ten? I came to borrow bread; But thy scrip is stuffed with cakes. I wanted wine; Thy vintage was but tother day. A wolf pursued me; Where are the tracings of a wolf? I came hither to catch birds; And when thou hast caught them why gettest thou not thyself home? I have a mind to see Chloe; But who art thou to confess such a thing as that to the father and mother of a maid? — and then, on every side vanquished, I shall stand mum. But enough; there is not one of all these things that carries not suspicion with it. Therefore it's better to go presently away in silence; and I shall see Chloe at the first peeping of the spring, since, as it seems, the Fates prohibit it in winter."

These thoughts cast up and down in his anxious mind and his prey taken up, he was thinking to be gone and was making away, when, as if Love himself had pitied his cause, it happened thus: Dryas and his family were at table, the meat was taken up and divided to messes, the bread was laid out, the wine-bowl set and trimmed. But one of the flock-dogs took his time while they were busy, and ran out adoors with a shoulder of mutton. Dryas was vexed (for that belonged to his mess), and snatching up a club, followed at his heels as if it had bin another dog. This pursuit brought him up to the ivy, where he espied the young Daphnis with his birds on his back, and about to pack away. With that, forgetting the dog and the flesh, he cries out amain, "Hail, boy! hail, boy!" and fell on his

neck to kiss him, and catching him by the hand, led him along into the house.

And then it wanted but a little that Daphnis and Chloe fell not both to the ground when at first they saw one another. Yet while they strove with themselves to stand upright, there passed salutations and kisses between them, and those to them were as pillars and sustentations to hold them from toppling into swoons. Daphnis having now got, beyond all hope, not only a kiss but Chloe herself too, sate down by the fire and laid upon the table his blackbirds and stock-doves; and fell to tell them how tedious the business of the house and keeping within had bin to him, and that therefore he was come to recreate himself and, as they saw, to catch birds; how he had taken some with lime-twigs, some with snares, as they were feeding greedily upon the ivy and the myrtle-berries.

They, on the other side, fell to commend and praise Daphnis his diligence, and bade him eat of that which the dog had left; and commanded Chloe to wait on them and fill their wine. She with a merry countenance filled to the rest, and after them to Daphnis; for she feigned a pretty anger because that when he was there he would offer to go away in such a manner and not see her. Yet before she gave it to him she kissed the cup and sipped a little, and so gave it. Daphnis, although he was almost choked for want of drink, drank slowly, tickling himself, by that delay, with longer pleasure.

Dinner was quickly done and the table voided of bread and meat, and when they were sate down everybody began to ask how Lamo and Myrtale had done a great while, and so went on to pronounce them happy folks who had got such a stay and cherisher of their old age. And it was no small pleasure to Daphnis to be praised so in the hearing of Chloe. And when, besides, they said that he must and should tarry with them the next day because it was their sacrifice to Bacchus, it wanted but a little that for very pleasure the ravished lover had worshipped them instead of Bacchus himself; and therefore presently he drew out of his scrip good store of sweet-cakes and the birds he had caught, and these were ordered to be made ready for supper.

A fresh bowl of wine was set, a new fire kindled up, and night soon coming on they fell to eat again. When supper was done and part of their time was spent in telling of old tales, part in singing some of the ditties of the fields, they went to bed, Chloe with her mother, Daphnis with Dryas. But then nothing was sweet and pleasing to poor Chloe but that the next morning she should see her Daphnis again; and Daphnis entertained the night himself with a fantastic, empty pleasure; for it was sweet to his imagination to lie but with the father of Chloe, and he often embraced and kissed him, dreaming to himself that it was she.

In the morning it was a sharp frost and the north wind was very nipping, when they all rose and prepared to celebrate. A young ram was sac-

rificed to Bacchus and a huge fire built up to cook the meat. While Nape was making the bread and Dryas boiling the ram, Daphnis and Chloe had time to go forth as far as the ivy-bush; and when he had set his snares again and pricked his lime-twigs, they not only catched good store of birds, but had a sweet collation of kisses without intermission, and a dear conversation in the language of love: "Chloe, I came for thy sake." "I know it, Daphnis." "'Tis long of thee that I destroy the poor birds." "What wilt thou with me?" "Remember me." "I remember thee, by the Nymphs by whom heretofore I have sworn in yonder cave, whither we will go as soon as ever the snow melts." "But it lies very deep, Chloe, and I fear I shall melt before the snow." "Courage, man; the Sun burns hot." "I would it burnt like that fire which now burns my very heart." "You do but gibe and cozen me!" "I do not, by the goats by which thou didst once bid me to swear to thee."

While Chloe, like another Echo, was holding her antiphona to Daphnis, Nape called and in they ran, with even more birds then had bin taken the day before. Now when they had made a libation from the bowl to Dionysus, they fell to their meat, with ivy crowns upon their heads. And when it was time, having cried the Jacchus and Euoe, they sent away Daphnis, his scrip first crammed with flesh and bread. They gave him too the stock-doves and thrushes to carry Lamo and Myrtale, as being like to catch themselves more while the frost and ivy lasted. And so Daphnis went his way when he had kissed the rest first and then Chloe, that he might carry along with him her kiss untouched and entire. And now by that device and now by this he came often thither, insomuch that the winter escaped not away wholly without some fruition of the sweets of love.

It was now the beginning of spring, the snow melting, the earth uncovering herself, and the grass growing green, when the other shepherds drove out their flocks to pasture, and Chloe and Daphnis before the rest, as being servants to a greater shepherd. And forthwith they took their course up to the Nymphs and that cave, and thence to Pan and his pine; afterwards to their own oak, where they sate down to look to their flocks and kiss each other. They sought about for flowers too to crown the statues of the Gods. The soft breath of Zephyrus, and the warm Sun, had but now brought them forth; but there were then to be found the violet, the daffodil, the anagall, with the other primes and dawnings of the spring. And when they had crowned the statues of the Gods with them, they made a libation with new milk, Chloe from the sheep and Daphnis from the goats. They paid too the first-fruits of the pipe, as it were to provoke and challenge the nightingales with their music and song. The nightingales answered softly from the groves, and as if they remembered their long intermitted song, began by little and little to jug and warble their Tereus and Itys again.

Here and there the blating of the flocks was heard, and the lambs came

skipping and inclined themselves obliquely under the dams to wriggle and nussle at their dugs. But those which had not yet teemed, the rams pursued, and had their will of them. There were seen too the more ardent chases of the he-goats, which sometimes had battles for the she's, and everyone had his own wives and kept them solicitously. Even old men, seeing such sights as these, had bin pricked to love, but the young and lusty were wholly inflamed with what they heard and melted away with what they saw, and amongst them was Daphnis chief. For he, as having spent his time in keeping tediously at home all the winter, was carried furiously to kissing and embracing, and in what he did was now more vehement then ever before. . . .

But there was a certain neighbor of his, a landed man, Chromis his name, and was now by his age somewhat declining. He married out of the city a young, fair, and buxom girl, one that was too fine and delicate for the country and a clown. Her name was Lycaenium, and she, observing Daphnis as every day early in the morning he drove his goats by to the fields and home again at the first twilight, had a great mind to beguile the youth by gifts to become her sweetheart. And therefore once when she had skulked for her opportunity and catched him alone, she had given him a curious fine pipe, some precious honeycombs, and a new scrip of stag-skin, but durst not break her mind to him because she could easily conjecture at that dear love he bore to Chloe; for she saw him wholly addicted to the girl.

So much then she had perceived before by the winking, nodding, laughing, and tittering that was between them. But that morning she had made Chromis believe that she was to go to a woman's labor, and had followed softly behind them two at some distance, and then slipped away into a thicket and hid herself; and so had heard all that they said and seen too all that they did, and even the tears of the untaught Daphnis had bin perfectly within her sight. Wherefore she began to condole the condition of the wretched lovers, and finding that she had light upon a double opportunity, she projected to accomplish both her desires by this device:

The next day, making as if she went to that woman again, she came up openly to the oak where Daphnis and Chloe were sitting together, and skilfully counterfeiting that she was scared, "Help, Daphnis, help me," quoth she; "an eagle has carried clean away from me the goodliest goose of twenty in a flock, which yet by reason of the great weight she was not able to carry to the top of that her wonted high crag, but is fallen down with her into yonder copse. For the Nymphs' sake and this Pan's, do thou, Daphnis, come in the wood with me and rescue my goose. For I dare not go in myself alone. Let me not thus lose the tale of my geese. And it may be thou mayst kill the eagle too, and then she will scarce come hither any more to prey upon the kids and lambs. Chloe for so long will look to the flock; the goats know her as thy perpetual companion in the fields."

Now Daphnis, suspecting nothing of that that was to come, gets up quickly, and taking his staff, followed Lycaenium, who led him as far from Chloe as possibly she could. And when they were come into the thickest part of the wood and she had bid him sit down by a fountain, "Daphnis," quoth she, "thou dost love Chloe, and that I learnt last night of the Nymphs. Those tears which yesterday thou didst pour down were shewn to me in a dream by them, and they commanded me that I should save thee by teaching thee all that thou shouldst know. . . . If then thou wouldst be rid of thy misery, come on, deliver thyself to me a sweet scholar, and I, to gratify the Nymphs, will be thy mistress."

At this, Daphnis, as being a rustic goatherd and a sanguine youth, could not contain himself for mere pleasure, but throws himself at the foot of Lycaenium and begs her that she would teach him that lesson quickly; and as if he were about to accept some rare and brave thing sent from the Gods, for her kindness he promised he would give her too a young kid, some of the finest beastings, nay, besides, he promised her the dam herself. Wherefore Lycaenium, now she had found a rustic simplicity beyond her expectation, gave the lad all his instruction. . . .

These advertisements given, Lycaenium went away through another glade of the wood, as if still she would look for her goose. . . .

And so he comes out of the wood up to the place where Chloe sate platting a garland of violets, and tells her he had rescued the goose from the claws of the eagle, then flinging his arms about her and clasping her to him, kissed her as he had Lycaenium. But Chloe fits the chaplet to his head, and then kisses his locks as fairer and sweeter than the violets; and out of her scrip she gave him of her cakes and simnels to eat, and snatched it by stealth from his mouth again as he was eating, and fed like a young bird in a nest.

While thus they eat and take more kisses then bits, they saw a fisherman's boat come by. The wind was down, the sea was smooth, and there was a great calm. Wherefore when they saw there was need of rowing, they fell to ply the oars stoutly. For they made haste to bring in some fish fresh from the sea to fit the palate of one of the richer citizens of Mytilene. That therefore which other mariners use to elude the tediousness of labour, these began, and held on as they rowed along. There was one amongst them that was the boatswain, and he had certain sea-songs. The rest, like a chorus all together, strained their throats to a loud holla, and catched his voice at certain intervals. While they did thus in the open sea, their voices vanished, as being diffused in the vast air. But when they came under a promontore into a flexuous, horned, hollow bay, there, as the voices of the rowers were heard stronger, so the songs of the boatswain to the answering mariners fell clearer to the land. For a hollow valley below received into itself that shrill sound as into an organ, and by an imitating voice rendered from itself all that was said, all that was done,

and everything distinctly by itself; by itself the clattering of the oars, by itself the whooping of the seamen; and certainly it was a most pleasant hearing. The sound coming first from the sea, the sound from the land ended so much the later by how much it was slower to begin.

Daphnis, therefore, knowing what it was, attended wholly to the sea, and was sweetly affected with the pinnace gliding by like a bird in the air, endeavouring the while to preserve to himself some of those tones to play afterwards upon his pipe. But Chloe, having then her first experience of that which is called echo, now cast her eyes towards the sea, minding the loud songs of the mariners, now to the woods, seeking for those who answered from thence with such a clamor. And when because the pinnace was passed away there was in the valley too a deep silence, she asked of Daphnis whether there were sea beyond the promontore and another ship did pass by there, and whether there were other mariners that had sung the same songs and all now were whist and kept silence together. At this, Daphnis laughed a sweet laugh, and giving her a sweeter kiss, put the violet chaplet upon her head, and began to tell her the tale of Echo, requiring first that when he had taught her that, he should have of her for his wages ten kisses more:

"There are of the Nymphs, my dear girl, more kinds than one. There are the Meliae of the Ash, there are the Dryades of the Oak, there are the Heleae of the Fen. All are beautiful, all are musical. To one of these Echo was daughter, and she mortal because she came of a mortal father, but a rare beauty, deriving from a beauteous mother. She was educated by the Nymphs, and taught by the Muses to play on the hautboy and the pipe, to strike the lyre, to touch the lute, and in sum, all music. And therefore when she was grown up and in the flower of her virgin beauty, she danced together with the Nymphs and sung in consort with the Muses; but fled from all males, whether men or Gods, because she loved virginity. Pan sees that, and takes occasion to be angry at the maid, and to envy her music because he could not come at her beauty. Therefore he sends a madness among the shepherds and goatherds, and they in a desperate fury, like so many dogs and wolves, tore her all to pieces and flung about them all over the earth her yet singing limbs. The Earth in observance of the Nymphs buried them all, preserving to them still their music property, and they by an everlasting sentence and decree of the Muses breathe out a voice. And they imitate all things now as the maid did before, the Gods, men, organs, beasts. Pan himself they imitate too when he plays on the pipe; which when he hears he bounces out and begins to post over the mountains, not so much to catch and hold as to know what clandestine imitator that is that he has got." When Daphnis thus had told his tale, Chloe gave him not only ten more kisses but innumerable. For Echo said almost the same, as if to bear him witness that he did not lie.

But now, when the Sun grew every day more burning, the spring going out and summer coming in, they were invited to new and summer pleasure. Daphnis he swom in the rivers, Chloe she bathed in the springs; he with his pipe contended with the pines, she with her voice strove with the nightingales. Sometimes they hunted the prattling locusts, sometimes they catched the chirping grasshoppers. They gathered flowers together, together they shaked the trees for mellow fruits. And now and then they lay side by side with a goatskin to their common coverlet. . . .

That summer Chloe had many suitors, and many came from many places, and came often, to Dryas, to get his goodwill to have her. Some brought their gifts along with them, others promised great matters if they should get her. Nape was tempted by her hope, and began to persuade him that the girl should be bestowed, and to urge that a maid of her age should not longer be kept at home; for who knows whether one time or other she may not for an apple or a rose, as she keeps the field, make some unworthy shepherd a man; and therefore it was better she should now be made the dame of a house, and that they getting much by her, it should be laid up for their own son, for of late they had born a jolly boy.

But Dryas was variously affected with what was said. Sometimes he was ready to give way; for greater gifts were named to him by everyone than suited with a rural girl, a shepherdess. Sometimes again be thought the maid deserved better than to be married to a clown, and that if ever she should find her true parents she might make him and his family happy. Then he defers his answer to the wooers and puts them off from day to day, and in the interim has many presents.

When Chloe came to the knowledge of this, she was very sad, and hid it long from Daphnis because she would not give him a cause of grief. But when he was importunate and urged her to tell him what the matter was, and seemed to be more troubled when he knew it not, than he should be when he knew it, then, poor girl, she told him all, as well of the wooers that were so many and so rich, as of the words by which Nape incited Dryas to marry her speedily, and how Dryas had not denied it but only had put it off to the vintage. Daphnis with this is at his wit's end, and sitting down he wept bitterly, and said that if Chloe were no longer to tend sheep with him he would die, and not only he, but all the flocks that lost so sweet a shepherdess.

After this passion Daphnis came to himself again and took courage, thinking he should persuade Dryas in his own behalf, and resolved to put himself among the wooers with hope that his desert would say for him, "Room for your betters." There was one thing troubled him worst of all, and that was, his father Lamo was not rich. That disheartened him, that allayed his hope much. Nevertheless it seemed best that he should come in for a suitor, and that was Chloe's sentence too. To Lamo he durst not

venture to speak, but put on a good face and spoke to Myrtale, and did not only shew her his love, but talked to her of marrying the girl. And in the night, when they were in bed, she acquainted Lamo with it. But Lamo entertaining what she said in that case very harshly, and chiding her that she should offer to make a match between a shepherd's daughter and such a youth as he, whose tokens did declare him a great fortune and of high extraction, and one that if his true parents were found would not only make them free but possessors of larger lands, Myrtale, considering the power of love, and therefore fearing, if he should altogether despair of the marriage, lest he should attempt something upon his life, returned him other causes then Lamo had, to contradict:

"My son, we are but poor, and have more need to take a bride that does bring us something than one that will have much from us. They, on the other side, are rich and such as look for rich husbands. Go thou and persuade Chloe, and let her persuade her father, that he shall ask no great matter, and give you his consent to marry. For, on my life, she loves thee dearly, and had rather a thousand times lie with a poor and handsome man than a rich monkey." And now Myrtale, who expected that Dryas would never consent to these things because there were rich wooers, thought she had finely excused to him their refusing of the marriage.

Daphnis knew not what to say against this, and so finding himself far enough off from what he desired, that which is usual with lovers who are beggars, that he did. With tears he lamented his condition, and again implored the help of the Nymphs. They appeared to him in the night in his sleep, in the same form and habit as before, and she that was eldest spoke again: "Some other of the Gods takes the care about the marrying of Chloe, but we shall furnish thee with gifts which will easily make her father Dryas. That ship of the Methymnaeans, when thy goats had eaten her cable, that very day was carried off by the winds far from the shore. But that night there arose a tempestuous sea-wind that blew to the land and dashed her against the rocks of the promontore; there she perished with much of that which was in her. But the waves cast up a purse in which there are three thousand drachmas, and that thou shalt find covered with ouse hard by a dead dolphin, near which no passenger comes, but turns another way as fast as he can, detesting the stench of the rotting fish. But do thou make haste thither, take it, and give it to Dryas. And let it suffice that now thou art not poor, and hereafter in time thou shalt be rich." This spoken, they passed away together with the night.

It was now day, and Daphnis leapt out of bed as full of joy as his heart could hold, and hurried his goats, with much whistling, to the field; and after he had kissed Chloe and adored the Nymphs, to the sea he goes, making as if that morning he had a mind to bedew himself with sea-water. And walking there upon the gravel, near the line of the excursion and breaking of the waves, he looked for his three thousand drachmas. But

soon he found he should not be put to much labor. For the stench of the dolphin had reached him as he lay cast up and was rotting upon the slabby sand. When he had got that scent for his guide, he came up presently to the place, and removing the ouse, found the purse full of silver. He took it up and put it into his scrip; yet went not away till with joyful devotion he had blest the Nymphs and the very sea; for though he was a keeper of goats, yet he was now obliged to the sea, and had a sweeter sense of that than the land, because it had promoted him to marry Chloe.

Thus having got his three thousand drachmas, he made no longer stay, but as if now he were not only richer then any of the clowns that dwelt there but than any man that trod on the ground, he hastens to Chloe, tells her his dream, shews her the purse, and bids her look to his flocks till he comes again. Then stretching and stritting along, he bustles in like a lord upon Dryas, whom he then found with Nape at the threshing-floor, and on a sudden talked very boldly about the marrying of Chloe: "Give me Chloe to my wife. For I can play finely on the pipe, I can cut the vines, and I can plant them. Nor am I ignorant how and when the ground is to be ploughed, or how the corn is to be winnowed and fanned by the wind. But how I keep and govern flocks, Chloe can tell. Fifty she-goats I had of my father Lamo; I have made them as many more and doubled the number. Besides, I have brought up goodly, proper he-goats; whereas before, we went for leaps to other men's. Moreover, I am a young man, your neighbor too, and one that you cannot twit in the teeth with anything. And, further, I had a goat to my nurse as your Chloe had a sheep. Since in these I have got the start and outgone others, neither in gifts shall I be any whit behind them. They may give you the scrag-end of a small flock of sheep and goats, a rascal pair of oxen, and so much corn as scant will serve to keep the hens. But from me, look you here, three thousand drachmas. Only let nobody know of this, no, not so much as my father Lamo." With that, he gave it into his hand, embraced Dryas, and kissed him.

They, when they saw such an unexpected sum of money, without delay promised him Chloe and to procure Lamo's consent. Nape therefore stayed there with Daphnis and drove her oxen about the floor to break the ears very small and slip out the grain, with her hurdle set with sharp stones. But Dryas, having carefully laid up the purse of silver in that place where the tokens of Chloe were kept, makes away presently to Lamo and Myrtale on a strange errand, to woo them for a bridegroom. Them he found a measuring barley newly fanned, and much dejected because that year the ground had scarcely restored them their seed. Dryas put in to comfort them concerning that, affirming it was a common cause, and that everywhere he met with the same cry; and then asks their good will that Daphnis should marry Chloe, and told them withal that although others did offer him great matters, yet of them he would take nothing, nay,

rather he would give them somewhat for him: "For," quoth he, "they have bin bred up together, and by keeping their flocks together in the fields are grown to so dear a love as is not easy to be dissolved, and now they are of such an age as says they may go to bed together." This said Dryas and much more, because for the fee of his oratory to the marriage he had at home three thousand drachmas.

And now Lamo could no longer obtend poverty (for Chloe's parents themselves did not disdain his lowness), nor yet Daphnis his age (for he was come to his flowery youth). That indeed which troubled him, and yet he would not say so, was this, namely that Daphnis was of higher merit then such a match could suit withal. But after a short silence, he returned him this answer: "You do well to prefer your neighbors to strangers, and not to esteem riches better than honest poverty. Pan and the Nymphs be good to you for this. And I for my part do not at all hinder this marriage. It were madness in me who am now ancient and want many hands to my daily work, if I should not think it a great and desirable good to join to me the friendship and alliance of your family. Besides, Chloe is sought after by very many, a fair maid and altogether of honest manners and behaviour. But because I am only a servant, and not the lord of anything I have, it is necessary my lord and master should be acquainted with this, that he may give his consent to it. Go to, then, let us agree to put off the wedding till the next autumn. Those that use to come from the city to us, tell us that he will then be here. Then they shall be man and wife, and in the mean time let them love like sister and brother. Yet know this, Dryas; the young man thou art in such haste and earnest about is far better than us." And Lamo having thus spoke embraced Dryas and kissed him, and made him sit and drink with him when now it was hot at high noon, and going along with him part of his way treated him altogether kindly.

But Dryas had not heard the last words of Lamo only as a chat; and therefore as he walked along he anxiously enquired of himself who Daphnis should be: "He was suckled indeed and nursed up by a goat, as if the providence of the Gods had appointed it so. But he's of a sweet and beautiful aspect, and no whit like either that flat-nosed old fellow or the baldpate old woman. He has besides three thousand drachmas, and one would scarcely believe that a goatherd should have so many pears in his possession. And has somebody exposed him too as well as Chloe? and was it Lamo's fortune to find him as it was mine to find her? And was he trimmed up with such like tokens as were found by me? If this be so, O mighty Pan, O ye beloved Nymphs, it may be that he having found his own parents may find out something of Chloe's secret too!"

These moping thoughts he had in his mind, and was in a dream up to the floor. When he came there, he found Daphnis expecting and pricking up his ears for Lamo's answer. "Hail, son," quoth he, "Chloe's husband,"

and promised him they should be married in the autumn; then giving him his right hand, assured him on his faith that Chloe should be wife to nobody but Daphnis.

Therefore without eating or drinking, swifter than thought he flies to Chloe, finds her at her milking and her cheese-making, and full of joy brings her the annunciation of the marriage, and presently began to kiss her, not as before by stealth in a corner of the twilight, but as his wife thenceforward, and took upon him part of her labor. He helped her about the milking-pail, he put her cheeses into the press, suckled the lambkins and the kids. And when all was done they washed themselves, eat and drank their fill, and went to look for mellow fruits.

And at that time there was huge plenty because it was the season for almost all. There were abundance of pears, abundance of apples. Some were now fallen to the ground, some were hanging on the trees. Those on the ground had a sweeter scent, those on the boughs a sweeter blush. Those had the fragrancy of wine, these had the flagrancy of gold. There stood one apple-tree that had all its apples pulled; all the boughs were now bare, and they had neither fruit nor leaves, but only there was one apple that swung upon the very top of the spire of the tree; a great one it was and very beautiful, and such as by its rare and rich smell would alone outdo many together. It should seem that he that gathered the rest was afraid to climb so high, or cared not to come by it. And peradventure that excellent apple was reserved for a shepherd that was in love.

When Daphnis saw it, he mantled to be at it, and was even wild to climb the tree, nor would he hear Chloe forbidding him. But she, perceiving her interdictions neglected, made in anger towards the flocks. Daphnis got up into the tree, and came to the place, and pulling it brought it to Chloe. To whom, as she shewed her anger against that adventure, he thus spoke: "Sweet maid, fair seasons begot this apple, and a goodly tree brought it up; it was ripened by the beams of the Sun and preserved by the care and kindness of Fortune. Nor might I let it alone so long as I had these eyes, lest either it should fall to the ground and some of the cattle as they feed should tread upon it or some creeping thing poison it, or else it should stay aloft for time to spoil while we only look at and praise it. Venus, for the victory of her beauty, carried away no other prize; I give thee this the palmary of thine. For we are alike, I that witness thy beauty and he that witnessed hers. Paris was but a shepherd upon Ida, and I am a goatherd in the happy fields of Mytilene." With that, he put it into her bosom, and Chloe pulling him to her kissed him. And so Daphnis repented him not of the boldness to climb so high a tree. For he received a kiss from her more precious then a golden apple.

The Fourth Book

And now one of Lamo's fellow-servants brought word from Mytilene that their lord would come towards the vintage, to see whether that irruption of the Methymnaeans had made any waste in those fields. When therefore the summer was now parting away and the autumn approaching, Lamo bestirred himself that his lord's sojourn should present him with pleasure everywhere. He scoured the fountains, that the water might be clear and transparent. He mucked the yard, lest the dung should offend him with the smell. The garden he trimmed with great care and diligence, that all might be pleasant, fresh, and fair.

And that garden indeed was a most beautiful and goodly thing, and such as might become a prince. For it lay extended in length a whole furlong. It was situate on a high ground, and had to its breadth four acres. To a spacious field one would easily have likened it. Trees it had of all kinds, the apple, the pear, the myrtle, the pomegranate, the fig, and the olive; and to these on the one side there grew a rare and taller sort of vines, that bended over and reclined their ripening bunches of grapes among the apples and pomegranates, as if they would vie and contend for beauty and worth of fruits with them. So many kinds there were of satives, or of such as are planted, grafted, or set. To these were not wanting the cypress, the laurel, the platan, and the pine. And towards them, instead of the vine, the ivy leaned, and with the errantry of her boughs and her scattered black-berries did imitate the vines and shadowed beauty of the ripening grapes.

Within were kept, as in a garrison, trees of lower growth that bore fruit. Without stood the barren trees, enfolding all, much like a fort or some strong wall that had bin built by the hand of art; and these were encompassed with a spruce, thin hedge. By alleys and glades there was everywhere a just distermination of things from things, and orderly discretion of tree from tree; but on the tops the boughs met to interweave their limbs and leaves with one another's, and a man would have thought that all this had not bin, as indeed it was, the wild of nature, but rather the work of curious art. Nor were there wanting to these, borders and banks of various flowers, some the earth's own volunteers, some the structure of the artist's hand. The roses, hyacinths, and lilies were set and planted by the hand; the violet, the daffodil, and anagall the earth gave up of her own good will. In the summer there was shade, in the spring the beauty and fragrancy of flowers, in the autumn the pleasantness of the fruits; and at every season amusement and delight. Besides, from the high ground there was a fair and pleasing prospect to the fields, the herdsmen, the shepherds, and the cattle feeding; the same too looked to the sea and saw all the boats and pinnaces a sailing by; insomuch that that was no small addition to the pleasure of this most sweet and florid place.

In the midst of this paradise, to the posture of the length and breadth of the ground, stood a fane and an altar sacred to Bacchus. About the altar grew the wandering, encircling, clinging ivy; about the fane the palmits of the vines did spread themselves. And in the more inward part of the fane were certain pictures that told the story of Bacchus and his miracles; Semele bringing forth her babe, the fair Ariadne laid fast asleep, Lycurgus bound in chains, wretched Pentheus torn limb from limb, the Indians conquered, the Tyrrhenian mariners transformed, Satyrs treading the grapes and Bacchae dancing all about. Nor was Pan neglected in this place of pleasure; for he was set up upon the top of a crag, playing upon his pipes and striking up a common jig to those Satyrs that trod the grapes in the press and the Bacchae that danced about it.

Therefore in such a garden as this that all might be fine, Lamo now was very busy, cutting and pruning what was withered and dry, and checking and putting back the too forward palmits. Bacchus he had crowned with flowery chaplets, and then brought down with curious art rills of water from the fountains, amongst the borders and the knots. There was a spring, one that Daphnis first discovered, and that, although it was set apart for this purpose of watering the flowers, was nevertheless, in favor to him, always called Daphnis his fountain.

But Lamo besides commanded Daphnis to use his best skill to have his goats as fat as might be; for their lord would be sure to see them too, who now would come into the country after he had bin so long away. Now Daphnis indeed was very confident, because he thought he should be looked upon and praised for them. For he had doubled the number he had received of Lamo, nor had a wolf ravened away so much as one, and they were all more twadding fat than the very sheep. But because he would win upon the lord to be more forward to approve and confirm the match, he did his business with great diligence and great alacrity. He drove out his goats betimes in the morning, and late in the evening brought them home. Twice a day he watered them, and culled out for them the best pasture ground. He took care too to have the dairy-vessels new, better store of milking-pails and piggins, and greater crates for the cheese. He was so far from being negligent in anything, that he tried to make their horns to shine with vernich, and combed their very shag to make them sleek, insomuch that if you had seen this you had said it was Pan's own sacred flock. Chloe herself too would take her share in this labor, and leaving her sheep would devote herself for the most part to the goats; and Daphnis thought 'twas Chloe's hand and Chloe's eyes that made his flocks appear so fair.

While both of them are thus busied, there came another messenger from the city, and brought a command that the grapes should be gathered with all speed; and told them withal he was to tarry with them there till the must was made, and then return to the town to wait upon his lord thither,

the vintage being then at the height. This Eudromus (for that was his name, because he was a foot-page) they all received and entertained with great kindness; and presently began the vintage. The grapes were gathered, cast into the press; the must made, and tunned into the vessels. Some of the fairest bunches of the grapes, together with their branches, were cut, that to those who came from the city a shew of the vintage-work and some of the pleasure of it might still remain.

And now Eudromus made haste to be gone and return to the town, and Daphnis gave him great variety of pretty gifts, but especially whatever could be had from a flock of goats; cheeses that were close pressed, a kid of the late fall, with a goatskin white and thick-shagged to fling about him when he ran in the winter. With this, Eudromus was very pleasantly affected, and kissed Daphnis, and told him that he would speak a good word for him to his master; and so went away with a benevolent mind to them.

But Daphnis went to feed his flock beside Chloe full of anxious thought; and Chloe, too, was not free from fear, namely, that a lad that had bin used to see nothing but goats, mountains, ploughmen, and Chloe, should then first be brought into the presence of his lord, of whom before he had heard nothing but only his name. For Daphnis, therefore, she was very solicitous, how he would come before his master, how he would behave himself, how the bashful youth would salute him. About the marriage, too, she was much troubled, fearing lest they might but only dream of a mere chance, or nothing at all. Therefore kisses passed between them without number, and such embracings of one another as if both of them were grown into one piece; but those kisses were full of fear, those embraces very pensive, as of them that feared their lord as then there, or kissed and clipped in hugger-mugger to him.

Moreover, then there arose to them such a distraction as this: There was one Lampis, an untoward, blustering, fierce herdsman; and he amongst the rest had wooed Dryas for Chloe, and given him many gifts, too, to bring on and dispatch the marriage. Therefore, perceiving that if their lord did not dislike it, Daphnis was to have the girl, he sets himself to find and practise a cunning trick to enrage and alienate their lord. And knowing that he was wonderfully pleased and delighted with that garden, he thought it best to spoil that as much as he could and devest it of all its beauty. To cut the trees he durst not attempt, for he would then be taken by the noise. Wherefore he thinks to ruin the flowers; and when 'twas night, gets over the hedge, and some he pulled up by the roots, or some he grasped and tore the stems, the rest he trod down like a boar; and so escaped unheard, unseen.

Lamo the next morning went into the garden to water the flowers from the spring. But when he saw all the place now made a waste, and that it was like the work of a mischievous enemy rather then a thief or robber.

he rent his clothes, and called so long upon the Gods, that Myrtale left all and ran out thither, and Daphnis, too, let his goats go where they would and ran back again. When they saw it, they cried out, lamented, and wept. To grieve for the flowers it was in vain, but alas! their lord they feared. And indeed a mere stranger, had he come there, might very well have wept with them. For all the glory of the place was gone, and nothing now remained but a lutulent soil. If any flower had escaped the outrage, it had yet, as it was then, a half-hid floridness and its glance, and still was fair although 'twas laid. And still the bees did sit upon them, and all along, in a mourning murmur, sang the funeral of the flowers.

And so Lamo out of his great consternation broke forth into these words: "Alas, alas, the rosaries, how are they broken down and torn! Woe is me, the violaries, how are they spurned and trodden down! Ah me, the hyacinths and daffodils which some villain has pulled up, the wickedest of all mortals! The spring will come, but those will not grow green again; it will be summer and these will not blow; the autumn will come, but these will give no chaplets for our heads. And didst not thou, Bacchus, lord of the garden, pity the suffering of these flowers, among which thou dwelledst, upon which thou lookedst, and with which I have crowned thee so often in joy and gladness? How shall I now shew this garden to my lord? In what mind will he look upon it? How will he take it? He will hang me up for an old rogue, like Marsyas upon a pine, and perchance poor Daphnis too, thinking his goats have done the deed." With these there fell more scalding tears; for now they wept not for the flowers, but themselves. And Chloe bewailed poor Daphnis his case if he should be hanged up and scourged, and wished their lord might never come, spending her days in misery, as if even then she looked upon her sweet Daphnis under the whip.

But towards night Eudromus came and brought them word that their lord would come within three days, and that their young master would be there to-morrow. Therefore about what had befallen them they fell to deliberate, and took in good Eudromus into their council. This Eudromus was altogether Daphnis his friend, and he advised they should first open the chance to their young lord, and promised himself an assistant too, as one of some account with him; for Astylus was nursed with his milk, and he looked upon him as a foster-brother. And so they did the next day.

Astylus came on horseback, a parasite of his with him, and he on horseback too. Astylus was now of the first down, but his Gnatho (that was his name) had long tried the barber's tools. But Lamo, taking Myrtale and Daphnis with him, and flinging himself at the feet of Astylus, humbly beseeched him to have mercy on an unfortunate old man, and save him from his father's anger, one that was not in fault, one that had done nothing amiss; and then told him what had befallen them. Astylus had pity

on the wretched suppliant, and went with him to the garden; and having seen the destruction of it as to flowers, he promised to procure them his father's pardon and lay the fault on the fiery horses, that were tied thereabouts, boggled o'er something, and broke their bridles, and so it happened that almost all the flowers everywhere were trodden down, broken, and torn, and flundered up.

At this, Lamo and Myrtale prayed the Gods would prosper him in everything; and young Daphnis soon after presented him with things made ready to that purpose; young kids, cream-cheeses, a numerous brood of hen-and-chickens, bunches of grapes hanging still upon their palmits, and apples on the boughs, and amongst them a bottle of the Lesbian wine, fragrant wine and the most excellent of drinks. Astylus commended their oblation and entertainment, and went a hunting the hare; for he was rich, and given to pleasure, and therefore came to take it abroad in the country.

But Gnatho, a man that had learnt only to guttle, and drink till he was drunk, and afterwards play the lecher, a man that minded nothing but his belly and his lasciviousness under that, he had taken a more curious view of Daphnis than others had, when he presented the gifts. . . .

When he had now thus deliberated with himself, he went not along with Astylus a hunting, but going down into the field where Daphnis kept he said he came to see the goats, but came indeed spectator of the youth. He began to palp him with soft words, praised his goats, called fondly on him for a pastoral tune, and said withal he would speedily impetrate his liberty for him, as being able to do what he would with his lord. . . . But Daphnis flung off this drunken sot, who scarce could stand upon his legs, and laid him on the ground, and then whipped away and left him. Nor would Daphnis endure it he should near him ever after, and therefore still removed his flocks, avoiding him and keeping Chloe carefully.

And indeed Gnatho did not proceed to trouble him further; for he had found him already not only a fair but a stout boy. But he waited an occasion to speak concerning him to Astylus, hoping to beg him of the gallant, as one that would bestow upon him many and better gifts then that. But it was not a time to talk of it now; for Dionysophanes was come with his wife Clearista, and all about was a busy noise, tumultuous pudder of carriages, and a long retinue of menservants and maids. But he thought with himself to make afterwards a speech concerning Daphnis, sufficient for love, sufficient for length.

Dionysophanes was now half gray, but very tall and well-limbed, and able at any exercise to grapple in the younger list. For his riches few came near him; for honest life, justice, and excellent manners, scant such another to be found. He, when he was come, offered the first day to the president Gods of rural business, to Ceres, Bacchus, Pan, and the Nymphs, and set up a common bowl for all that were present. The other

days he walked abroad to take a view of Lamo's works; and seeing how the ground was ploughed, how swelled with palmits and how trim the vineyard was, how fair and flourishing the viridary (for as for the flowers, Astylus took the fault upon himself), he was wonderfully pleased and delighted with all; and when he had praised Lamo much, he promised besides to make him free.

Afterwards he went into the other fields to see the goats and him that kept them. Now Chloe fled into the wood; for she could not bear so strong a presence and was afraid of so great a company. But Daphnis stood girt with a skin from a thick-shagged goat, a new scrip about his shoulders, in one hand holding green cheeses, with the other leading suckling kids. If ever Apollo would be hired to serve Laomedon and tend on herds, just so he looked as Daphnis then. He spoke not a word, but all on a blush, casting his eyes upon the ground, presented the rural gifts to his lord. But Lamo spoke: "Sir," quoth he, "this is the keeper of those goats. To me you committed fifty she's and two he's. Of them he has made you an hundred now and ten he-goats. Do you see how plump and fat they are, how shaggy and rough their hair is, how entire and unshattered their horns? Besides he has made them musical. For if they do but hear his pipe, they are ready to do whatsoever he will."

Clearista heard him what he said, and being struck with a longing to have it presently tried whether it were so indeed or not, she bids Daphnis to play to his goats as he wonted to do, promising to give him for his piping a coat, a mantle, and new shoes. Daphnis, when all the company was sate as a theatre, went to his oak, and standing under it drew his pipe out of his scrip. And first he blowed something that was low and smart, and presently the goats rose up and held their heads bolt upright. Then he played the pastoral or grazing tune, and the goats cast their heads downwards to graze. Then again he breathed a note was soft and sweet, and all lay down together to rest. Anon he struck up a sharp, violent, tumultuous sound, and they all rushed into the wood as if a wolf had come upon them. After a while he piped aloud the recall, and they wheeled out of the wood again and came up to his very feet. Never was there any master of a house that had his servants so obsequious to his commands. All the spectators admired his art, but especially Clearista, insomuch that she could not but swear she would give him the things she promised, who was so fair a goatherd and skilled in music even to wonder.

From this pleasure they returned to the cottage to dine, and sent Daphnis some of their choicer fare to the fields; where he feasted himself with Chloe, and was sweetly affected by those delicates and confections from the city, and hoped he had pleased his lord and lady so, that now he should not miss the maid. But Gnatho now was more inflamed with those things about the goats; and counting his life no life at all unless he had Daphnis at his will, he catched Astylus walking in the garden, and leading

him with him into Bacchus his fane, he fell to kiss his hands and his feet. But he inquiring why he did so and bidding him tell what was the matter with him, and swearing withal to hear and help him in anything, "Master, thy Gnatho is undone," quoth he; "for I who heretofore was in love with nothing but thy plenteous table, and swore nothing was more desirable, nothing of a more precious tang, than good old wine, I that have often affirmed that thy confectioners and cooks were the sweetest things in Mytilene, I shall now hereafter for ever think that nothing is fair and sweet but Daphnis; and giving over to feed high, although thou art furnished every day with flesh, with fish, with banqueting, nothing could be more pleasant to me than to be turned into a goat, to eat grass and green leaves, hear Daphnis his pipe and be fed at his hand. But do thou preserve thy Gnatho, and be to him the victor of victorious love. Unless it be done, I swear by thee that art my God, that when I have filled my paunch with meat, I'll take this dagger and kill myself at Daphnis his door. And then you may go look your little pretty Gnatho, as thou usest daily to call me."

Astylus, a generous youth and one that was not to learn that love was a tormentous fire, could not endure to see him weep in such a manner and kiss his feet again and again; but promised him to beg Daphnis of his father to wait upon him at Mytilene. And to hearten up Gnatho, as he before had bin heartened up himself, he smiled upon him and asked him whether he were not ashamed to be in love with a son of Lamo's, nay, with a boy that kept goats. And while he said that, he made as if to show how abominable to him was the strong perfume of goats.

Gnatho on the other side, like one that had learnt the wanton discourse among good fellows in the drinking schools, was ready to answer him pat concerning himself and Daphnis thus: "We lovers, Sir, are never curious about such things as those. But wheresoever we meet with beauty, there undoubtedly we are catched. And hence it is that some have fallen in love with a tree, some with a river, some with a beast. And who would not pity that miserable lover whom we know fatally bound to live in fear of that that's loved? But I, as I love the body of a servant, so in that the beauty of the most ingenuous. Do you not see his locks are like the hyacinths? and his eyes under the brows like diamonds burning in their golden sockets? how sweetly ruddy are his cheeks, and his mouth rowed with elephant-pearl? And what lover would not be fond to take from thence the sweetest kisses? But if I love a keeper of flocks, in that I imitate the Gods. Anchises was a herdsman, and Venus had him; Branchus was a goatherd, and Apollo loved him; Ganymedes was but a shepherd, and yet he was the rape of the king of all. We ought not then to contemn a youth to whom we see even the goats, for very love of one so fair, every way obedient. Nay rather, that they let such a beauty as that continue here upon the earth, we owe our thanks to Jupiter's eagles."

At that word Astylus had a sweet laugh, and saying, "O what mighty sophisters this Love can make," began to cast about him for a fit time to speak to his father about Daphnis.

Eudromus hearkened in secret what was said, and because he both loved Daphnis as an honest youth and detested in himself that such a flower of beauty should be put into the hands of a filthy sot, he presently told both Daphnis and Lamo all that happened. Daphnis was struck to the heart with this, and soon resolved either to run away with Chloe or to die with her. But Lamo, getting Myrtale out of doors, "What shall we do?" quoth he; "we are all undone. Now or never is our time to open all that hitherto has bin concealed. Gone is my herd of goats, and gone all else too. But by Pan and all the Nymphs, though I should be left alone to myself like an ox forgotten in a stall, I will not longer hide his story, but declare I found him an exposed child, make it known how he was nursed, and shew the significations found exposed together with him. And let that rotten rascal Gnatho know himself, and what it is he dares to love. Only make ready the tokens for me."

This agreed, they went again into the house. But Astylus, his father being at leisure, went quickly to him and asked his leave to take Daphnis from the country to serve him at Mytilene; for he was a fine boy, far above the clownish life, and one that Gnatho soon could teach the city garb. His father grants it willingly, and presently sending for Lamo and Myrtale, lets them know the joyful news that Daphnis should hereafter wait upon Astylus in the city, and leave his keeping goats; and instead of him he promised to give them two goatherds.

And now, when Lamo saw the servants running together and hug one another for joy they were to have so sweet a fellow-servant in the house, he asked leave to speak to his lord, and thus began: "Hear me, Sir, a true story that an old man is about to tell you. And I swear by Pan and the Nymphs that I will not lie a jot. I am not the father of Daphnis, nor was Myrtale so happy as to be the mother of so sweet a youth. Other parents exposed that child, having enow before. And I found him where he was laid and suckled by a goat of mine; which goat, when she died, I buried in yonder skirt of the garden, to use her kindly because she had played the part of a mother. Together with him I found habiliments exposed and signs, methought, of what he was. I confess them to you, Sir, and have kept them to this day. For they make him of higher fortune then we have any claim to. Wherefore, although I think not much he should become the servant of the noble Astylus, a good servant of a good and honest lord, yet I cannot endure to have him now exposed to the drunken glutton Gnatho, and as it were be made a slave to such a drivel."

Lamo, when he had thus said, held his peace and wept amain. But Gnatho beginning to bluster and threatening to cudgel Lamo, Dionysophanes was wholly amazed at what was said, and commanded him silence,

bending his brows and looking stern and grim upon him; then again questioned Lamo, charging him to speak the truth and tell him no such tales as those to keep Daphnis his son. But when he stood to what he said and swore to it by all the Gods, and would submit it to torture if he did deceive him, he examined every passage over again, Clearista sitting judge to him: "What cause is there that Lamo should lie, when for one he is to have two goatherds? And how should a simple country-fellow feign and forge such things as these? No, sure; it had been straightway incredible that of such an old churl and such an urchin as his wife there should come a child so fair."

And now it seemed best to insist no longer upon conjectures, but to view the tokens and try if they reported anything of a more noble and splendid fortune. Myrtale therefore went and brought them all to them, laid up safe in an old scrip. Dionysophanes looked first, and seeing there the purple mantle, the gold brooch, the dagger with the ivory heft, he cried out loud "Great Jupiter the governor!" and called his wife that she might see. She too, when she saw them, cried out amain, "O dear, dear Fates! are not these those very things we exposed with a son of our own? Did we not send Sophrone to lay him here in these fields? They are no other, but the same, my dear! This is our child without doubt. Daphnis is thy son, and he kept his father's goats."

While Clearista was yet speaking, and Dionysophanes was kissing those sweet revelations of his child and weeping over them for joy, Astylus hearing it was his brother, flings off his cloak, and o'er the green away he flies in an earnest desire to be the first to entertain him with a kiss. Daphnis, seeing him make towards him so fast with such a company, and hearing his own name in the noise, thinking he came to apprehend him, flung away his scrip and his pipe, and in the scare set a running towards the sea to cast himself from the high crag. And peradventure the new-found Daphnis, strange to tell, had then bin lost, but that Astylus perceiving it cried out to him more clearly, "Stay, Daphnis; be not afraid; I am thy brother, and they thy parents that were hitherto thy lords. Now Lamo has told us all concerning the goat, and shewed the tokens thou hadst about thee. Turn thee and see with what a rejoicing, cheerful face they come along. But do thou kiss me first of all. By the Nymphs I do not lie." After that oath he ventured to stand, and stayed till Astylus came at him, then offered him a kiss.

While they were kissing and embracing, the rest of the company came in, the men-servants, the maids, the father, and with him the mother. Everyone kissed him and hugged him in their arms, rejoicing and weeping. But Daphnis embraced his father and his mother the most familiarly of all the rest, and clinged to them as if he had known them long before, and would not part out of their arms. So quickly comes belief to join with nature. And he forgot even Chloe for a little while.

And when they got back to the cottage, they turned him out of his old clothes and put him in a gallant habit; and then seated near his own father he heard him speak to this purpose: "I married a wife, my dear sons, when I was yet very young, and after a while it was my happiness (so I thought it) to be a father. For first I had a son born, the second a daughter, and then Astylus the third. I thought there was enow of the breed; and therefore I exposed this boy, who was born after the rest, and set him out with those toys, not for the tokens of his stock but for sepulchral ornaments. But Fortune had other thoughts and counsels about him. For so it was that my eldest son and my daughter died on the same disease upon one and the same day. But thou, by the providence of the Gods, art kept alive and saved for us, in design to make us happy by more helps and manuductors to our age. So do not thou, when it comes in thy mind that thou wast exposed, take it unkindly or think evil of me; for it was not with a willing mind. Neither do thou, good Astylus, take it ill that now thou art to have but a part for the whole inheritance; for to any man that's wise there is no possession more precious than a brother is. Therefore esteem and love one another, and for your riches compare and vie yourselves with kings. For I shall leave you large lands, servants industrious and true, gold and silver, all the fortunate possess. Only in special I give to Daphnis this manor, with Lamo and Myrtale, and the goats that he has kept."

While he was still going on in speech, Daphnis starting, "'Tis well remembered, father," quoth he; "'tis time to go and lead my goats to watering. They are now dry and now expecting my pipe, and I am loitering and lolling here." They all laughed sweetly at this, to see him that was now a lord turning into a goatherd again; and so another was sent away to rid his mind of that care.

And now, when they had sacrificed to Jupiter Soter, the saviour of the exposed child, they made ready a jovial, rejoicing feast. And only Gnatho was not there; for he was in a mighty fear, and took sanctuary in Bacchus his fane, and there he was a sneaking suppliant night and day. But the fame flying abroad that Dionysophanes had found a son, and that Daphnis the goatherd proved the lord both of the goats and the fields they fed in, the rurals came in with the early day, some from one place, some another, there to congratulate the youth and bring their presents to his father. And amongst these Dryas was first, Dryas to whom Chloe was nursling.

And Dionysophanes made them all stay as partakers of his joy and exultation, and to celebrate also the great feast of the Invention of Daphnis. Therefore great store of wine and bread was furnished out, water-fowl of all sorts, sucking-pigs, various curiosities of sweet cakes, wafers, simnels, and pies. And many victims that day were slain and offered to the Gods of Lesbos. Daphnis then, having got all his pastoral furniture about him,

cast it into several offerings, his thankful donaries to the Gods. To Bacchus he dedicates his scrip and mantle, to Pan his whistle and his oblique pipe, his goat-hook to the holy Nymphs, and milking-pails that he himself had made. But so it is, that those things we have long bin acquainted withal and used ourselves to, are more acceptable and pleasing to us than a new and insolent felicity; and therefore tears fell from his eyes at every valediction to this and that, nor did he offer the pails to the Nymphs till he had milked into them first, nor his mantle till he had lapped himself in it, nor his pipe till he had piped a tune or two; but he looked wistly upon all the things and would not let them go without a kiss. Then he spoke to the she-goats, and called the he-goats by their names. Out of the fountain too he needs must drink before he goes, because he had drank there many a time, and with his sweetest, dearest Chloe. But as yet he did not openly profess to his love, because he waited a season to it.

And therefore in the mean time, while he was keeping holy-day, it was thus with poor Chloe: By the flocks she sate and wept, and complained to herself and them, as it was like, in this manner: "Daphnis has forgot me. Now he dreams of a great marriage. To what purpose is it now, that instead of the Nymphs I would make him swear to me by the goats? He has forsaken them and me. And when he sacrificed to Pan and to the Nymphs, he would not so much as see Chloe. Perchance he has found a prettier wench then I amongst his mother's maids. Fare him well! But I must die, and will not live."

While thus she was maundering and afflicting herself, Lampis the herdsman, coming upon her with a band of rustics, ravished her away, presuming Daphnis had cast off all thoughts of Chloe and Dryas too would be content to let him have her. And so she was carried away, crying out most piteously. But one that saw it told it Nape, she Dryas, and Dryas Daphnis. This put Daphnis almost quite out of his wits, and to his father he durst not speak, nor was he able to endure in that condition; and therefore slinking away into the circuit-walks of the garden, broke forth into lamentations: "O the bitter invention of Daphnis! How much better was it for me to keep a flock! And how much happier was I when I was a servant! Then I fed my eyes with the sight of Chloe and my lips with her kisses; but now she is the rape of Lampis, and with him she lies to-night. And I stay here and melt myself away in wine and soft delights, and so in vain have sworn to her by Pan and by the goats."

These heavy complaints of Daphnis it was Gnatho's fortune to hear as he was skulking in the garden. And presently apprehending the happy hour to appease Daphnis and make him propitious, he takes some of Astylus his servants, makes after Dryas, bids them shew him to Lampis his cottage, and plucks up his heels to get thither. And lighting on him in the nick as he was hauling Chloe in, he took her from him and banged his band of clowns. And Lampis himself he endeavored to take and

bring him bound as a captive from some war; but he prevented that by flight. This undertaking happily performed, he returned with the night, and found Dionysophanes at his rest, but Daphnis yet watching, weeping, and waiting in the walks. There he presents his Chloe to him, gives her into his hands, and tells the story of the action; then beseeches him to bear him no grudge, but take him as a servant not altogether unuseful, and not interdict him the table to make him die for want. Daphnis, seeing Chloe and having her now in his own hands, was reconciled by that service, and received him into favor; then excused himself to Chloe for his seeming to neglect her.

And now advising together about their intended wedding, it was, they thought, the best way still to conceal it, and to hide Chloe in some hole or other, then to acquaint his mother only with their love. But Dryas was not of that opinion. He would have the father know the whole business as it was, and himself undertakes to bring him on. In the morning betimes, with Chloe's tokens in his scrip, he goes to Dionysophanes and Clearista who were sitting in the garden. And Astylus was there present, and Daphnis himself. And silence made, the old goatherd thus begun: "Such a necessity as Lamo had, compels me now to speak those things that hitherto have bin concealed. This Chloe I neither begot nor had anything to do in her nursing up. But some others were her parents, and a sheep gave her suck in the Nymphaeum where she lay. I myself saw it done and wondered at it; wondering at it, took her home and brought her up. And the excessive sweetness of her face bears me witness to what I say; for she is nothing like to us. The fine accoutrements she had about her make it more apparent too; for they are richer than becomes a shepherd's coat. Here they are; view them well, seek out her kin, and so try whether at length she may not be found not unworthy to marry Daphnis."

These words, as they were not unadvisedly cast in by Dryas, so neither were they heard by Dionysophanes without regard. But casting his eyes upon Daphnis, and seeing him look pale upon it and his tears stealing down his face, presently deprehended it was love. Then, as one that was solicitous rather about his own son than another man's daughter, he falls with all accurateness to reprehend what Dryas had said. But when he saw the monitory ornaments, her girdle, her ankle-bands, and her gilded shoes, he called her to him, bid her be of good cheer, as one that now had a husband and ere long should find her father and her mother. So Clearista took her to her care, and tricked her up and made her fine, as from that time her son's wife. And Dionysophanes, taking Daphnis aside, asked him if Chloe were a maid; and he swearing that nothing had passed betwixt them but only kissing, embracing, and oaths, his father was much delighted to hear of that pretty conjuration by which they had bound themselves to one another, and made them sit down together to a banquet brought in.

And then one might presently see what beauty was when it had got its proper dress. For Chloe being so clothed, washed, and dressed in her hair, did so outshine to every eye her former beauty, that her own Daphnis now could scarce know her. And any man, without the faith of tokens, might now have sworn that Dryas was not the father of so fair a maid. But he was there, and Nape, and Lamo and Myrtale, feasting at a private table.

And again for some days after, upon this invention Chloe, were immolations to the Gods, and the settings up of bowls of wine. And Chloe consecrated her trinkets, that skin she used to wear, her scrip, her pipe, her milking-pails. She mingled wine, too, with that fountain in the cave, because close by it she was nursed, and had often washed in it. The grave of her nurse, shown to her by Dryas, she adorned with many garlands; and to her flock, as Daphnis had done, played a little on her pipe. Then she prays to the Goddesses that she might find them, that exposed her, to be such as would not misbecome her marriage with Daphnis.

And now they had enough of feasting and holy-days in the fields, and would return to Mytilene, look out Chloe's parents there, and speedily have a wedding on't. In the morning betime when they were ready to go, to Dryas they gave other three thousand drachmas; to Lamo half of that land, to sow and mow and find him wine, and the goats together with the goatherds, four pair of oxen for the plough, winter clothes, and made his wife free. Then anon with a great pomp and a brave shew of horses and waggons, on they moved towards Mytilene.

And because it was night before they could come in, they escaped the citizens' gaping upon them. But the next day there was a throng of men and women at the door, these to give joys and rejoice with Dionysophanes who had found a son (and their joy was much augmented when they saw the excessive sweetness of the youth), those to exult with Clearista who had brought home not only a son but a bride too. For Chloe's beauty had struck the eyes of them, a beauty for its lustre beyond estimation, beyond excess by any other. In fine, the whole city was with child to see the young man and the maid, and now with loud ingeminations cried "A happy marriage, a blessed marriage." They prayed, too, the maid might find her birth as great as she was fair, and many of the richer ladies prayed the Gods they might be taken for mothers of so sweet a girl.

Now Dionysophanes, after many solicitous thoughts, fell into a deep sleep, and in that had this vision: He thought he saw the Nymphs petition Cupid to grant them at length a licence for the wedding; then that Love himself, his bow unbent and his quiver laid by, commanded him to invite the whole nobility of Mytilene to a feast, and when he had set the last bowl, there to show the tokens to everyone; and from that point commence and sing the Hymenaeus. When he had seen and heard this, up he gets as soon as day, and gave order that a splendid supper should be

provided of all varieties, from the land, from the sea, from the marshes, from the rivers; and had to his guests all the best of the Mytilenaeans.

And when night was fallen and the last bowl was filled, out of which libation is wont to be poured to Mercury, one of the servants came in with Chloe's trinkets upon a silver plate, and carrying them about towards the right hand, presented them to every eye. Of the others there was none that knew them. Only one Megacles, who for his age sate last, when he saw them, knowing presently what they were, cried out amain with a youthful strong voice: "Bless me! what is this that I see? What is become of thee, my little daughter? Art thou yet indeed alive? or did some shepherd find thee and carry these home without thee? Tell me for God's sake, Dionysophanes, how came you by the monuments of my child? Envy not me the finding something after Daphnis."

But Dionysophanes bidding him first relate the exposing of the child, he remitted nothing of his former tone, but thus went on: "Some years ago I had but a scanty livelihood. For I spent what I had on the providing of plays and shews and the furnishing out the public galleys. In this condition I had a daughter born. And despairing, because of my want, of an honourable education for her, I exposed her with these monumental toys, knowing that even by that way many are glad to be made fathers. In a Nymphaeum she was laid, and left to the trust of the resident Goddesses. After that, I began to be rich, and grew richer every day, yet had no heir; nor was I afterwards so fortunate as to be father but to a daughter. But the Gods, as if they mocked me for what I had done, sent me a dream which signified that a sheep should make me a father."

Dionysophanes upon that burst out louder then Megacles, and sprung away into a near withdrawing-room, and brought in Chloe finely dressed as curiosity could do it. And in haste to Megacles "This," quoth he, "is that same daughter of thine that thou didst expose. This girl a sheep by a divine providence did nurse for thee, as a goat did my Daphnis. Take her tokens, take thy daughter; then by all means give her to Daphnis for a bride. We exposed both of them, and have now found them both. Pan, the Nymphs, and Love himself took care of both." Megacles highly approved the motion, and commanded his wife Rhode should be sent for thither, and took his sweet girl to his bosom. And that night they lay where they were; for Daphnis had sworn by all the Gods he would not let Chloe go, no, not to her own father.

When it was day, 'twas agreed to turn again into the fields. For Daphnis and Chloe had impetrated that, by reason of the strangeness of city conversation to them. Besides, to the others too it seemed the best to make it a kind of pastoral wedding. Therefore coming to Lamo's house, to Megacles they brought Dryas, Nape to Rhode, and all things were finely disposed and furnished to the rural celebration. Then before the statues of the Nymphs her father gave Chloe to Daphnis, and with other more

precious things suspended her tokens for offerings in the cave. Then in recognition of Dryas his care, they made up his number ten thousand drachmas.

And Dionysophanes for his share, the day being serene, open, and fair, commanded there should be beds of green leaves made up before the very cave, and there disposed the villagers to their high feasting jollity. Lamo was there and Myrtale, Dryas and Nape, Dorco's kindred and friends, Philetas and his lads, Chromis and his Lycaenium. Nor was even Lampis absent; for he was pardoned by that beauty that he had loved.

Therefore then, as usually when rural revellers are met together at a feast, nothing but georgics, nothing but what was rustical was there. Here one sang like the reapers, there another prattled it and flung flirts and scoffs as in the autumn from the press. Philetas played upon his pipes, Lampis upon the hautboy. Dryas and Lamo danced to them. Daphnis and Chloe clipped and kissed. The goats too were feeding by, as themselves part of that celebrity; and that was not beyond measure pleasing to those from the city, but Daphnis calls up some of the goats by their names, and gives them boughs to browze upon from his hand, and catching them fast by the horns, took kisses thence.

And thus they did not only then for that day; but for the most part of their time held on still the pastoral mode, serving as their Gods the Nymphs, Cupid, and Pan, possessed of sheep and goats innumerable, and nothing for food more pleasant to them than apples and milk. Besides, they laid a son down under a goat, to take the dug, and a daughter that was born after him under a sheep. Him they called Philopoemen, her they named the fair Agelaea. And so the pastoral mode grew old with them. The cave they adorned with curious work, set up statues, built an altar of Cupid the Shepherd, and to Pan a fane to dwell instead of a pine, and called him Pan Stratiotes, Pan the Soldier.

But this adorning of the cave, building an altar and a fane, and giving them their names, was afterwards at their opportunity. Then, when it was night, they all lead the bride and bridegroom to their chamber, some playing upon whistles and hautboys, some upon the oblique pipes, some holding great torches. And when they came near to the door, they fell to sing, and sang, with the grating harsh voices of rustics, nothing like the Hymenaeus, but as if they had bin singing at their labor with mattock and hoe. But Daphnis and Chloe lying together began to clip and kiss, sleeping no more then the birds of the night. And Daphnis now profited by Lycaenium's lesson; and Chloe then first knew that those things that were done in the wood were only the sweet sports of children.

Ancient Rome

INTRODUCTION

THE earliest period of Roman Literature yields practically nothing in the way of fiction. Though the epic and historical writers of the Third Century B.C., carried over Greek literary forms and ideas into Italy, and made use of Greek myths and historical materials, doubtless incorporating into their works a certain amount of indigenous material, it is not until the advent of the historian Livy (59 B.C.–17 A.D.) that we have anything that resembles prose fiction. Almost contemporary with Livy was the poet Ovid, in whose *Metamorphoses* we have a series of Greek legends retold in verse. These tales are very highly finished short stories and novels.

Short narratives in the form of fables were brought to a point of artistic perfection by Phædrus, who wrote shortly after the beginning of the Christian era, and in later times by Avianus and others.

But it is in the work of Petronius (died 66 A.D.) and Apuleius (born about 125 A.D.) that we find the first works written, like the late Greek romances, in prose for the purpose of interesting and amusing readers. The *Satyricon* of Petronius — only a fragment of a larger work which has not survived — is enough to prove that the author was a master of the art of naturalistic character-drawing.

The *Golden Ass* of Apuleius is admittedly the most highly-finished of the existing Latin prose romances. Though it includes in its very loose framework several short stories and anecdotes that have little or nothing to do with the central plot, the narrative holds the interest from beginning to end. Of the many tales in the *Golden Ass*, *Cupid and Psyche* is the most beautiful.

After Apuleius there is little in Latin fiction that has survived. But there is no room for doubt that the folk-lore and mythology and history of the later Roman Empire were transmitted in one form or another to the writers of the Middle Ages, for it reappeared in the fables, epics, biographies and collections of stories that were known throughout Europe between the Fifth and the Fifteenth Centuries.

APULEIUS

(Born about 125 A.D.)

Lucius Apuleius was born and educated in northern Africa. Very little is known of his life except that he practised law, travelled extensively, and was interested in the ceremonies and mysteries of religion.

His chief (and probably his first) work was the *Metamorphoses*, better known as the *Golden Ass*. Apuleius' work was based, directly or indirectly, on a short romance by the satirist Lucian, called *Lucius*. However, the Latin writer expanded his original by interpolating several stories of his own. "It seems," says one of the modern editors, "to be reasonable then to assume that the author's part in this work was to add the interpolations, and to retell the narrative in picturesque language of his own."

Cupid and Psyche is, so far as we know, Apuleius' own story, though it contains several familiar ideas and episodes from the folklore of other peoples and earlier times.

The story is told (in the 4th, 5th, and 6th Books) by one character to another, as a "pleasant old wives' tale to put away all thy sorrow and to revive thy spirits."

The translation here used is that by William Adlington, published in London in 1566. The spelling and punctuation have been modernised.

CUPID AND PSYCHE

THERE was sometimes a certain King, inhabiting in the west parts, who had to wife a noble Dame, by whom he had three daughters exceeding fair: of whom the two elder were of such comely shape and beauty, as they did excel and pass all other women living; whereby they were thought, worthily, to deserve the praise and commendation of every person, and deservedly to be preferred above the residue of the common sort: yet the singular passing beauty and maidenly majesty of the youngest daughter, did so far surmount and excel them two, as no earthly creature could by any means sufficiently express or set out the same. By reason whereof, after the fame of this excellent maiden was spread abroad in every part of the city, the citizens and strangers there, being inwardly pricked by zealous affection to behold her famous person, came daily by thousands, hundreds, and scores, to her father's palace; who as astonied with admiration of her incomparable beauty, did no less worship and reverence her, with crosses, signs and tokens, and other divine adorations, according to the custom of the old used rites and ceremonies, than if she were Lady Venus indeed. And shortly after the fame was spread into the

next cities and bordering regions, that the Goddess whom the deep seas had borne and brought forth, and the froth or the spurging waves had nourished, to the intent to show her high magnificence and divine power on earth, to such as erst did honour and worship her, was now conversant amongst mortal men: or else that the earth and not the seas, by a new concourse and influence of the celestial planets, had budded and yielded forth a new Venus, endowed with the flower of virginity. So daily more and more increased this opinion, and now is her flying fame dispersed into the next Island, and well-nigh into every part and province of the whole world. Whereupon innumerable strangers resorted from far countries, adventuring themselves by long journeys on land, and by great perils on water, to behold this glorious Virgin. By occasion whereof such a contempt grew towards the Goddess Venus, that no person travelled unto the town Paphos, nor to the Isle Gindos, no, nor to Cythera, to worship her. Her ornaments were thrown out, her temples defaced, her pillows and quishons torn, her ceremonies neglected, her images and statues uncrowned, and her bare altars unswept, and foul with the ashes of old burned sacrifice. For why, every person honoured and worshipped this maiden instead of Venus; and in the morning at her first coming abroad, offered unto her oblations, provided banquets, called her by the name of Venus which was not Venus indeed, and in her honour presented flowers and garlands in most reverent fashion.

This sudden change and alteration of celestial honour did greatly inflame and kindle the mind of very Venus, who, unable to temper herself from indignation, shaking her head in raging sort, reasoned with herself in this manner: "Behold the original parent of all these elements, behold the Lady Venus renounced throughout all the world, with whom a mortal maiden is joined now partaker of honour; my name registered in the city of heaven, is profaned and made vile by terrene absurdities. If I shall suffer any mortal creature to present my majesty in earth, or that any shall hear about a false surmised shape of my person: then in vain did Paris that shepherd, in whose just judgment and confidence the great Jupiter had affiance, prefer me above the residue of the Goddesses for the excellence of my beauty. But she, whatsoever she be that hath usurped mine honour, shall shortly repent her of her unlawful estate." And by and by she called her winged son Cupid, rash enough and hardy, who by his evil manners, contemning all public justice and law, armed with fire and arrows, running up and down in the nights from house to house, and corrupting the lawful marriages of every person, doth nothing but that which is evil; who although that he were of his own proper nature sufficient prone to work mischief, yet she egged him forward with words and brought him to the city, and showed him Psyche (for so the maiden was called), and having told the cause of her anger, not without great rage: "I pray thee (quoth she), my dear child, by motherly bond of love, by

the sweet wounds of thy piercing darts, by the pleasant heat of thy fire, revenge the injury which is done to thy mother, by the false and disobedient beauty of a mortal maiden, and I pray thee without delay, that she may fall in love with the most miserable creature living, the most poor, the most crooked, and the most vile, that there may be none found in all the world of like wretchedness." When she had spoken these words, she embraced and kissed her son, and took her voyage towards the sea.

When she was come to the sea, she began to call the Gods and Goddesses, who were obedient at her voice. For incontinent came the daughters of Nereus singing with tunes melodiously; Portunus with his bristled and rough beard; Salatia with her bosom full of fish; Palemon the driver of the Dolphin, the trumpeters of Triton leaping hither and thither, and blowing with heavenly noise: such was the company which followed Venus marching towards the ocean sea.

In the mean season Psyche with all her beauty received no fruit of her honour. She was wondered at of all, she was praised of all, but she perceived that no king nor prince, nor any of the inferior sort did repair to woo her. Every one marvelled at her divine beauty, as it were at some image well painted and set out. Her other two sisters which were nothing so greatly exalted by the people, were royally married to two kings; but the virgin Psyche sitting at home alone lamented her solitary life, and being disquieted both in mind and body, although she pleased all the world, yet hated she in herself her own beauty.

Whereupon the miserable father of this unfortunate daughter, suspecting that the Gods and powers of heaven did envy her estate, went into the town called Miletus to receive the oracle of Apollo, where he made his prayers and offered sacrifice, and desired a husband for his daughter: but Apollo though he were a Grecian and of the country of Ionia, because of the foundation of Miletus, yet he gave answer in Latin verse, the sense whereof was this —

Let Psyche's corpse be clad in mourning weed
And set on rock of yonder hill aloft;
Her husband is no wight of human seed,
But serpent dire and fierce, as may be thought,
Who flies with wings above in starry skies,
And doth subdue each thing with fiery flight.
The Gods themselves and powers that seem so wise
With mighty love be subject to his might.
The rivers black and deadly floods of pain
And darkness eke as thrall to him remain.

The King sometimes happy, when he heard the prophecy of Apollo returned home sad and sorrowful, and declared to his wife the miserable

and unhappy fate of his daughter; then they began to lament, and weep, and passed over many days in great sorrow. But now the time approached of Psyche's marriage: preparation was made, black torches were lighted, the pleasant songs were turned into pitiful cries, the melody of Hymen was ended with deadly howling, the maiden that should be married did wipe her eyes with her veil; all the family and people of the city, weeped likewise, and with great lamentation was ordained a remiss time for that day, but necessity compelled that Psyche should be brought to her appointed place according to the divine commandment.

And when the solemnity was ended, they went to bring this sorrowful spouse, not to her marriage, but to her final end and burial. And while the father and mother of Psyche did go forward, weeping and crying to do this enterprise, Psyche spake unto them in this sort: "Why torment you your unhappy age with continual dolour? why trouble you your spirits, which are more rather mine than yours? why soil ye your faces with tears, which I ought to adore and worship? why tear you my eyes in yours? why pull you your hoary hairs? why knock you your breasts for me? Now you see the reward of my excellent beauty: now, now, you perceive, but too late, the plague of envy. When the people did honour me and call me new Venus, then you should have wept, then you should have sorrowed, as though I had been then dead: For now I see and perceive that I am come to this misery by the only name of Venus, bring me, and as fortune hath appointed, place me on the top of the rock; I greatly desire to end my marriage, I greatly covet to see my husband. Why do I delay? why should I refuse him that is appointed to destroy all the world?"

Thus ended she her words, and thrust herself amongst the people that followed. Then they brought her to the appointed rock of the high hill, and set her thereon and so departed. The torches and lights were put out with the tears of the people; and every man gone home, the miserable parents well-nigh consumed with sorrow gave themselves to everlasting darkness.

Thus poor Psyche being left alone weeping and trembling on the top of the rock, was blown by the gentle air and of shrilling Zephyrus, and carried from the hill with a meek wind, which retained her garments up, and by little and little brought her down into a deep valley, where she was laid in a bed of most sweet and fragrant flowers.

Thus fair Psyche being sweetly couched amongst the soft and tender herbs, as in a bed of sote and fragrant flowers, and having qualified the troubles and thoughts of her restless mind, was now well reposed. And when she had refreshed herself sufficiently with sleep, she rose with a more quiet and pacified mind, and fortuned to espy a pleasant wood environed with great and mighty trees. She espied likewise a running river as clear as crystal: in the midst of the wood, well-nigh at the fall of the river, was a

princely edifice, wrought and builded, not by the art or hand of man, but by the mighty power of God: and you would judge at the first entry therein, that it were some pleasant and worthy mansion for the powers of heaven. For the embowings above were of cytern and ivory, propped and undermined with pillars of gold, the walls covered and seeled with silver, divers sorts of beasts were graven and carved, that seemed to encounter with such as entered in: all things were so curiously and finely wrought, that it seemed either to be the work of some demi-god, or god himself. The pavement was all of precious stone, divided and cut one from another, whereon was carved divers kinds of pictures, in such sort, that blessed and thrice blessed were they which might go upon such a pavement: every part and angle of the house was so well adorned, that by reason of the precious stones and inestimable treasure there, it glittered and shone in such sort that the chambers, porches and doors gave light as it had been the sun. Neither otherwise did the other treasure of the house disagree unto so great a majesty, that verily it seemed in every point a heavenly palace fabricate and builded for Jupiter himself.

Then Psyche moved with delectation approached nigh, and taking a bold heart entered into the house, and beheld everything there, with great affection: she saw storehouses wrought exceeding fine, and replenished with abundance of riches. Finally there could nothing be devised which lacked there, but amongst such great store of treasure, this was more marvellous, that there was no closure, bolt, nor lock to keep the same. And when with great pleasure she viewed all these things, she heard a voice without any body that said: "Why do you marvel, madame, at so great riches? behold all that you see is at your commandment: wherefore go you into the chamber and repose yourself upon the bed, and desire what bath you will have, and we whose voices you hear be your servants, and ready to minister unto you according to your desire. In the mean season, royal meats and dainty dishes shall be prepared for you."

Then Psyche perceived the felicity of divine providence, and according to the advertisement of the incorporal voices, she first reposed herself upon the bed, and then refreshed her body in the bains. This done, she saw the table garnished with meats, and a chair to sit down.

When Psyche was set down, all sorts of divine meats and wines were brought in, not by any body, but as it were with a wind, for she could see no person before her, but only hear voices on every side. After that all the services were brought to the table, one came in and sang invisibly, another played on the harp, but she saw no man. The harmony of the instruments did so greatly thrill in her ears, that though there were no manner of person, yet seemed she in the midst of a multitude of people.

All these pleasures finished, when night approached Psyche went to bed: and when she was laid, that the sweet sleep came upon her, she

greatly feared her virginity, because she was alone: then came her unknown husband and lay with her: and after that he had made a perfect consummation of the marriage, he rose in the morning before day, and departed.

Soon after came her invisible servants, presenting such things as were necessary for her defloration. And thus she passed forth a great while: and, as it happened, the novelty of the things by continual custom did increase her pleasure, but specially the sound of the instruments was a comfort unto her being alone.

During this time that Psyche was in this place or pleasures, her father and mother did nothing but weep and lament, and her two sisters hearing of her most miserable fortune came with great dolour and sorrow to comfort and speak with their parents.

The night following, Psyche's husband spake unto her (for she might feel his eyes, his hands, and his ears), and said: "O my sweet spouse and dear wife, fortune doth menace unto thee imminent peril and danger, whereof I wish thee greatly to beware: For know thou that thy sisters, thinking thou art dead, be greatly troubled, and are come to the mountain by thy steps. Whose lamentations if thou fortune to hear, beware that thou do in no wise either make answer or look up towards them: for if thou do, thou shalt purchase to me a great sorrow, and to thyself utter destruction." Psyche, hearing her husband, was contented to do all things as he commanded.

After that he was departed, and the night passed away, Psyche lamented and cried all the day following, thinking that now she was past all hope of comfort, in that she was closed within the walls of a prison, deprived of human conversation, and commanded not to aid or assist her sorrowful sisters, no nor once to see them: Thus she passed all the day in weeping and went to bed at night without any refection of meat or bain.

Incontinently after came her husband, who, when he had embraced her sweetly, gan say: "Is it thus that you perform your promise, my sweet wife? What do I find here, pass you all the day and the night in weeping? and will you not cease in your husband's arms? Go to, do what you will, purchase your own destruction, and when you find it so, then remember my words, and repent, but too late."

Then she desired her husband more and more, assuring him that she should die, unless he would grant that she might see her sisters, whereby she might speak with them and comfort them; whereat at length he was contented, and moreover he willed that she should give them as much gold and jewels as she would. But he gave her a further charge, saying: "Beware that ye covet not, being moved by the pernicious counsel of your sisters, to see the shape of my person, lest by your curiosity you be deprived of so great and worthy estate."

Psyche being glad herewith rendered unto him most entire thanks, and

said: "Sweet husband, I had rather die than to be separate from you: for whosoever you be, I love and retain you within my heart, as if you were mine own spirit or Cupid himself: but I pray you grant this likewise, that you would command your servant Zephyrus to bring my sisters down into the valley, as he brought me." Wherewithal she kissed him sweetly, and desired him gently to grant her request, calling him her spouse, her sweetheart, her joy, and her solace, whereby she enforced him to agree to her mind: and when morning came he departed away.

After long search made, the sisters of Psyche came unto the hill where she was set on the rock, and cried with a loud voice, in such sort that the stones answered again: And when they called their sister by her name, that their lamentable cries came unto her ears, she came forth, and said: "Behold, here is she for whom you weep, I pray you torment yourselves no more, cease your weeping." And by and by she commanded Zephyrus by the appointment of her husband to bring them down: Neither did he delay, for with gentle blasts he retained them up, and laid them softly in the valley: I am not able to express the often embracing, kissing, and greeting which was between them three, all sorrows and tears were then laid apart. "Come in," quoth Psyche, "into our house, and refresh your afflicted minds with your sister." After this she showed them the storehouses of treasure, she caused them to hear the voices which served her, the bain was ready, the meats were brought in, and when they had eaten and filled themselves with divine delicacies, they conceived great envy within their hearts, and one of them being very curious, did demand what her husband was, of what state and who was the Lord of so precious a house, but Psyche, remembering the promise which she made to her husband, feigned that he was a young man of comely stature, with a flaxen beard, and had great delight in hunting in the hills and dales by. And lest by her long talk she should be found to trip or fail in her words, she filled their laps with gold, silver and jewels, and commanded Zephyrus to carry them away.

When they were brought up to the mountain, they took their ways homeward to their own houses, and murmured with envy that they bare against Psyche, saying: "Behold, cruel and contrary fortune, behold how we, born all of one parent, have divers destinies; but especially we that are the elder two, be married to strange husbands, made as handmaidens, and as it were banished from our country and friends, whereas our youngest sister has so great abundance of treasure and gotten a God to her husband, who hath no skill how to use so great plenty of riches. Saw you not, sister, what was in the house? what great store of jewels, what glittering robes, what gems, what gold we trod on? That if she have a husband according as she affirmeth, there is none that liveth this day more happy in all the world than she. And so it may come to pass, that at length for the great affection and love which he may bear unto her, he

may make her a Goddess: for, by Hercules, such was her countenance, so she behaved herself, that, as a Goddess, she had voices to serve her, and the winds did obey her. But I, poor wretch, have first married a husband elder than my father, more bald than a coot, more weak than a child, and that locketh me up all day in the house."

Then said the other sister: "And in faith I am married to a husband that hath the gout, twyfold, crooked, nor courageous in paying my debt; I am fain to rub and mollify his stony fingers with divers sorts of oils, and to wrap them in plasters and salves, so that I soil my white and dainty hands with the corruption of filthy clouts, not using myself like a wife, but more like a servant. And you, my sister, seem likewise to be in bondage, and servitude, wherefore I cannot abide to see our younger sister in such great felicity; saw you not, I pray, how proudly and arrogantly she handled us even now? and how in vaunting herself she uttered her presumptuous mind; how she cast a little gold into our laps, and being weary of our company, commanded that we should be borne and blown away? Verily I live not nor am a woman, but I will deprive her of all her bliss: And if you, my sister, be so far bent as I, let us consult together, and not utter our mind to any person, no nor yet to our parents, nor tell that ever we saw her. For it sufficeth that we have seen her, whom it repenteth to have seen. Neither let us declare her good fortune to our father, nor to any other, since as they seem not happy whose riches are unknown: so shall she know that she hath sisters, no abjects, but more worthier than she. But now let us go home to our husbands and poor houses, and when we are better instructed, let us return to suppress her pride." So this evil counsel pleased these two evil women, and they hid the treasure which Psyche gave them, and tore their hair, renewing their false and forged tears. When their father and mother beheld them weep and lament still, they doubled their sorrows, and griefs, but full of ire and forced with envy, they took their voyage homewards, devising the slaughter and destruction of their sister.

In the mean season the husband of Psyche did warn her again in the night with these words: "Seest thou not," quoth he, "what peril and danger evil fortune doth threaten unto thee, whereof if thou take not good heed, it will shortly come upon thee. For the unfaithful harlots do greatly endeavour to set their snares to catch thee, and their purpose is to make and persuade thee to behold my face, which if thou once fortune to see, as I have often told, thou shalt see no more. Wherefore if these naughty hags, armed with wicked minds, do chance to come again, as I think no otherwise but that they will, take heed that thou talk not with them, but simply suffer them to speak what they will. Howbeit if thou canst not restrain thyself, beware that thou have no communication of thy husband, nor answer a word if they fortune to question of me; so will we increase our stock, and this young and tender child, couched in

this young and tender belly of thine, if thou conceal my secrets, shall be made an immortal god, otherwise a mortal creature." Then Psyche was very glad that she should bring forth a divine babe, and very joyful in that she should be honoured as a mother: she reckoned and numbered carefully the days and months that passed, and being never with child before, did marvel greatly that in so small a time her belly should swell so big.

But those pestilent and wicked furies, breathing out their serpentine poison, took shipping to bring their enterprise to pass. Then Psyche was warned again by her husband in this sort: "Behold the last day, the extreme case, and the enemies of thy blood, hath armed themselves against us, pitched their camps, set their host in array, and are marching towards us, for now thy two sisters have drawn their swords, and are ready to slay thee. Oh, with what force are we assailed this day! O sweet Psyche, I pray thee to take pity on thyself, of me, and deliver thy husband, and this infant within thy belly from so great a danger: and see not, neither hear these cursed women, which are not worthy to be called thy sisters, for their great hatred, and breach of sisterly amity; for they will come, like sirens, to the mountain, and yield out their piteous and lamentable cries." When Psyche had heard these words, she sighed sorrowfully, and said: "O dear husband, this long time you have had experience and trial of my faith, and doubt you not but that I will persevere in the same; wherefore command your wind Zephyrus, that he may do as he hath done before, to the intent that where you have charged me not to behold your venerable face, yet that I may comfort myself with the sight of my sisters. I pray you by these beautiful hairs, by these round cheeks delicate and tender, by your pleasant hot breast, whose shape and face I shall learn at length by the child in my belly, grant the fruit of my desire, refresh your dear spouse Psyche with joy, who is bound and linked unto you for ever. I little esteem to see your visage and figure, little do I regard the night and darkness thereof, for you are my only light." Her husband, being as it were enchanted with these words, and compelled by violence of her often embracing, wiping away her tears with his hair, did yield unto his wife. And when morning came departed as he accustomed to do.

Now her sisters arrived on land, and never rested till they came to the rock, without visiting of their father and mother, and leaped down rashly from the hill themselves: Then Zephyrus according to the divine commandment brought them down, though it were against his will, and laid them in the valley without any harm. By and by they went into the palace to their sister without leave, and when they had eftsoons embraced their prey, and thanked her with flattering words for the treasure which she gave them, they said: "O dear sister Psyche, know you that you are now no more a child, but a mother: O what great joy bear you unto us in your belly: what a comfort will it be unto all the house! how happy shall we

be, that shall see this infant nourished amongst so great plenty of treasure! that if he be like his parents, as it is necessary he should, there is no doubt but a new Cupid shall be born." By this kind of means they went about to win Psyche by little and little; but because they were weary with travel, they sat them down in chairs, and after that they had washed their bodies in bains, they went into a parlour, where all kind of meats were ready prepared. Psyche commanded one to play with his harp; it was done. Then immediately others sang, others tuned their instruments, but no person was seen; by whose sweet harmony and modulation the sisters of Psyche were greatly delighted.

Howbeit the wickedness of these cursed women was nothing suppressed by the sweet noise of these instruments, but they settled themselves to work their treason against Psyche, demanding who was her husband, and of what parentage. Then she, having forgotten, by too much simplicity, that which she had spoken before of her husband, invented a new answer; and said that her husband was of a great province, a merchant, and a man of middle age, having his beard intersparsed with gray hairs, which when she had said, because she would have no further talk, she filled their laps full of gold and silver, and bid Zephyrus to bear them away.

In their return homeward they murmured with themselves saying: "How say you, sister, to so apparent a lie of Psyche's? For first she said that her husband was a young man of flourishing years, and had a flaxen beard, and now she saith that it is half gray with age; what is he that in so short space can become so old? You shall find it no otherwise, my sister, but that either this cursed queen hath invented a great lie, or else that she never saw the shape of her husband. And if it be so that she never saw him, then verily she is married to some God, and hath a young God in her belly; but if it be a divine babe, and fortune to come to the ears of my mother (as God forbid it should) then may I go and hang myself; wherefore let us go to our parents and with forged lies let us colour the matter."

After they were thus inflamed, and had visited their parents, they returned again to the mountain, and by the aid of the wind Zephyrus were carried down into the valley, and after they had strained their eyelids to enforce themselves to weep, they called unto Psyche in this sort: "Thou, ignorant of so great evil, thinkest thyself sure and happy, and sittest at home nothing regarding thy peril, whereas we go about thy affairs, and are careful lest any harm should happen unto thee: for we are credibly informed, neither can we but utter it unto thee, that there is a great serpent full of deadly poison, with a ravenous and gaping throat, that lieth with thee every night. Remember the oracle of Apollo, who pronounced that thou shouldest be married to a dire and fierce serpent; and many of the inhabitants hereby, and such as hunt about in the country, affirm that they saw him yester-night returning from pasture

and swimming over the river, whereby they do undoubtedly say that he will not pamper thee long with delicate meats, but when the time of delivery shall approach, he will devour both thee and thy child. Wherefore advise thyself, whether thou wilt agree unto us that are careful for thy safety, and so avoid the peril of death, and be contented to live with thy sisters, or whether thou wilt remain with the serpent, and in the end to be swallowed into the gulf of his body. And if it be so, that thy solitary life, thy conversation with voices, this servile and dangerous pleasure, and the love of the serpent do more delight thee: say not but that we have played the parts of natural sisters in warning thee." Then the poor simple miser Psyche was moved with the fear of so dreadful words, and being amazed in her mind, did clean forget the admonitions of her husband and her own promises made unto him; and throwing herself headlong into extreme misery, with a wan and sallow countenance, scantly uttering a third word, at length gan say in this sort:

"O my most dear sisters, I heartily thank you for your great kindness towards me, and I am now verily persuaded that they which you hear of, have informed you of nothing but truth: for I never saw the shape of my husband, neither know I from whence he came, only I hear his voice in the night; insomuch that I have an uncertain husband, and one that loveth not the light of the day, which causeth me to suspect that he is a beast, as you affirm. Moreover I do greatly fear to see him, for he doth menace and threaten great evil unto me, if I should go about to spy and behold his shape. Wherefore, my loving sisters, if you have any wholesome remedy for your sister in danger, give it now presently." Then they opening the gates of their subtile minds, did put away all privy guile, and egged her forward in her fearful thoughts, persuading her to do as they would have her; whereupon one of them began and said: "Because that we little esteem any peril or danger to save your life, we intend to show you the best way and mean as we may possibly do. Take a sharp razor and put it under the pillow of your bed, and see that you have ready a privy burning lamp with oil, hid under some part of the hanging of the chamber; and, finely dissimulating the matter, when, according to his custom, he cometh to bed and sleepeth soundly, arise you secretly, and with your bare feet go and take your lamp, with the razor in your right hand, and with valiant force cut off the head of the poisonous serpent, wherein we will aid and assist you: and when by the death of him, you shall be made salve, we will marry you to some comely man." After they had thus inflamed the heart of their sister, fearing lest some danger might happen unto them by reason of their evil counsel, they were carried by the wind Zephyrus to the top of the mountain, and so they ran away, and took shipping.

When Psyche was left alone (saving that she seemed not to be alone, being stirred by so many furies) she was in a tossing mind, like the waves

of the sea; and although her will was obstinate, and resisted to put in execution the counsel of her sisters, yet she was in doubtful and divers opinions touching her calamity. Sometime she would, sometime she would not, sometime she is bold, sometime she feareth, sometime she mistrusteth, sometime she is moved, sometime she hateth the beast, sometime she loveth her husband: but at length the night came, whenas she made preparation for her wicked intent.

Soon after her husband came, and when he had kissed and embraced her, he fell asleep. Then Psyche (somewhat feeble in body and mind, yet moved by cruelty of fate) received boldness, and brought forth the lamp, and took the razor, so by her audacity she changed her kind. But when she took the lamp, and came to the bedside, she saw the most meek and sweetest beast of all beasts, even fair Cupid couched fairly, at whose sight the very lamp increased his light for joy, and the razor turned his edge. But when Psyche saw so glorious a body, she greatly feared, and, amazed in mind, with a pale countenance, all trembling, fell on her knees, and thought to hide the razor, yea verily in her own heart; which she had undoubtedly done, had it not through fear of so great an enterprise fallen out of her hand. And when she saw and beheld the beauty of his divine visage she was well recreated in her mind. She saw his hairs of gold that yielded out a sweet savour: his neck more white than milk: his purple cheeks, his hair hanging comely behind and before, the brightness whereof did darken the light of the lamp: his tender plume-feathers dispersed upon his shoulders like shining flowers, and trembling hither and thither; and his other parts of his body so smooth and soft that it did not repent Venus to bear such a child. At the bed's feet lay his bow, quiver, and arrows, that be the weapons of so great a God; which when Psyche did curiously behold, and marvelling at the weapons of her husband, took one of the arrows out of the quiver, and pricked herself withal, wherewith she was so grievously wounded that the blood followed, and thereby of her own accord she added love upon love; then more and more broiling in the love of Cupid, she embraced him and kissed him a thousand times fearing the measure of his sleep. But alas! while she was in this great joy, whether it were for envy, or for desire to touch this amiable body likewise, there fell out a drop of burning oil from the lamp upon the right shoulder of the God. O rash and bold lamp, the vile ministry of love, how darest thou be so bold as to burn the God of all fire when he invented thee, to the intent that all lovers might with more joy pass the nights in pleasure?

The God being burned in this sort, and perceiving that promise and faith was broken, he fled away without utterance of any word, from the eyes and hands of his most unhappy wife. But Psyche fortuned to catch him, as he was rising, by the right thigh, and held him fast as he flew about in the air, until such time that constrained by weariness she let go

and fell down upon the ground. But Cupid followed her down, and lighted upon the top of a cypress tree, and angerly spake unto her in this manner: "O simple Psyche, consider with thyself, how I, little regarding the commandment of my mother, who willed me that thou shouldst be married to a man of base and miserable condition, did come myself from heaven to love thee, and wounded my own body with my proper weapons to have thee to my spouse. And did I seem a beast unto thee, that thou shouldst go about to cut off my head with a razor, who loved thee so well? Did not I always give thee in charge? did not I gently will thee to beware? But those cursed aiders and counsellors of thine, shall be worthily rewarded for their pains. As for thee, thou shalt be sufficiently punished by my absence." When he had spoken these words, he took his flight into the air.

Then Psyche fell flat on the ground, and as long as she might see her husband, she cast her eyes after him into the air, weeping and lamenting piteously; but when he was gone out of her sight, she threw herself into the next running river, for the great anguish and dolour that she was in, for the lack of her husband. Howbeit the water would not suffer her to be drowned, but took pity upon her, in the honour of Cupid which accustomed to broil and burn the river, and so threw her upon the bank amongst the herbs.

Then Pan, the rustical God, sitting on the riverside, embracing and teaching the Goddess Canna to tune her songs and pipes, by whom were feeding the young and tender goats, after that he perceived Psyche in so sorrowful case, not ignorant, I know not by what means, of her miserable estate, endeavoured to pacify her in this sort: "O fair maid, I am a rustic and rude herdsman, howbeit, by reason of my old age, expert in many things; for as far as I can learn by conjecture, which, according as wise men do term, is called divination, I perceive by your uncertain gait, your pale hue, your sobbing sighs, and your watery eyes, that you are greatly in love. Wherefore hearken to me, and go not about to slay yourself, nor weep not at all, but rather adore and worship the great God Cupid, and win him unto you by your gentle promise of service." When the God of Shepherds had spoken these words, she gave no answer but made reverence unto him as to a God, and so departed.

After that Psyche had gone a little way, she fortuned unawares to come to a city where the husband of one of her sisters did dwell; which when Psyche did understand, she caused that her sister had knowledge of her coming, and so they met together, and after great embracing and salutation, the sister of Psyche demanded the cause of her travel thither. "Marry," quoth she, "do not you remember the counsel that you gave me, whereby you would that I should kill the beast, who under colour of my husband did lie with me every night? You shall understand, that as soon as I brought forth the lamp to see and behold his shape, I perceived

that he was the son of Venus, even Cupid himself that lay with me. Then I, being stroken with great pleasure, and desirous to embrace him, could not thoroughly assuage my delight, but alas! by evil chance, the boiling oil of the lamp fortuned to fall on his shoulder, which caused him to awake, who, seeing me armed with fire and weapon, gan say: 'How darest thou be so bold as to do so great a mischief? Depart from me, and take such things as thou didst bring: for I will have thy sister (and named you) to my wife, and she shall be placed in my felicity.' And by and by he commanded Zephyrus to carry me away from the bounds of his house."

Psyche had scantly finished her tale, but her sister, pierced with the prick of carnal desire and wicked envy, ran home, and, feigning to her husband that she had heard of the death of her parents, took shipping and came to the mountain. And although there blew a contrary wind, yet being brought in a vain hope she cried: "O Cupid, take me, a more worthy wife, and thou Zephyrus bear down thy mistress!" and so she cast herself down headlong from the mountain; but she fell not into the valley neither alive nor dead, for all the members and parts of her body were torn amongst the rocks, whereby she was made a prey to the birds and wild beasts, as she worthily deserved.

Neither was the vengeance of the other delayed; for Psyche travelling in that country fortuned to come to another city, where her other sister did dwell, to whom when she had declared all such things as she told to her first sister, she ran likewise unto the rock and was slain in like sort. Then Psyche travelled about in the country to seek her husband Cupid, but he was gotten into his mother's chamber, and there bewailed the sorrowful wound, which he caught by the oil of the burning lamp.

Then the white bird the Gull, which swimmeth on the waves of the water, flew towards the ocean sea, where she found Venus washing and bathing herself: to whom she declared that her son was burned and in danger of death; and moreover that it was a common bruit in the mouth of every person who spake evil of all the family of Venus, that her son doth nothing but haunt harlots in the mountain, and she herself lasciviously used to riot in the sea; whereby they say, that they are now become no more gracious, no more pleasant, no more gentle, but incivil, monstrous and horrible; moreover the marriages are not for any amity, or for love of procreation, but full of envy, discord and debate. This the curious Gull did clatter in the ears of Venus, reprehending her son. But Venus began to cry, and said: "What, hath my son gotten any love? I pray thee, gentle bird, that dost serve me so faithfully, tell me what she is and what is her name, that hath troubled my son in such sort? whether she be any of the Nymphs, of the number of the Goddesses, of the company of the Muses, or of the mistery of my Graces?" To whom the bird answered: "Madame, I know not what she is, but this I know, that she is called Psyche." Then Venus with indignation cried out: "What, is it she? the

usurper of my beauty, the vicar of my name? What, will he think that I was a bawd, by whose show he fell acquainted with the maid?" And immediately she departed, and went to her chamber, where she found her son wounded as it was told unto her, whom when she beheld she cried out in this sort.

"Is this an honest thing? is this honorable to thy parents? is this reason that thou hast violated and broken the commandment of thy mother and sovereign mistress? And whereas thou shouldst have vexed my enemy with loathsome love, thou hast done contrary? For being but of tender and unripe years, thou hast with too licentious appetite embraced my most mortal foe, to whom I shall be made a mother, and she a daughter. Thou presumest and thinkest, thou trifling boy, thou varlet, and without all reverence, that thou art most worthy and excellent, and that I am not able by reason of mine age to have another son, which if I might have, thou shouldst well understand that I would bear a more worthier than thou. But to work thee a greater despite, I do determine to adopt one of my servants, and to give him these wings, this fire, this bow and these arrows, and all other furniture which I gave to thee, not for this purpose, neither is anything given to thee of thy father for this intent: but first thou hast been evil brought up and instructed in thy youth: thou hast thy hands ready and sharp: thou has often offended thy ancients, and especially me that am thy mother, thou hast pierced me with thy darts, thou contemnest me as a widow, neither dost thou regard thy valiant and invincible father: and to anger me more, thou art amorous of wenches and harlots. But I will cause that thou shalt shortly repent thee, and that this marriage shall be dearly bought. To what a point am I now driven: what shall I do? Whither shall I go? how shall I repress this beast? Shall I ask aid of mine enemy Sobriety, whom I have often offended to engender thee? or shall I seek for counsel of every poor and rustic woman? No, no, yet had I rather die; howbeit I will not cease my vengeance; to her must I have recourse for help, and to none other, I mean to Sobriety, who may correct thee sharply, take away thy quiver, deprive thee of thy arrows, unbend thy bow, quench thy fire, and, which is more, subdue thy body with punishment; and when that I have rased and cut off this thy hair, which I have dressed with mine own hands, and made to glitter like gold, and when I have clipped thy wings which I myself have caused to burgen, then shall I think to have sufficiently revenged myself upon thee, for the injury which thou hast done." When she had spoken these words she departed in a great rage out of her chamber.

Immediately as she was going away, came Juno and Ceres demanding the cause of her anger. Then Venus made answer: "Verily you are come to comfort my sorrow, but I pray you with all diligence to seek out one whose name is Psyche, who is a vagabond and runneth about the countries, and as I think, you are not ignorant of the bruit of my son Cupid,

and of his demeanour, which I am ashamed to declare." Then they understanding and knowing the whole matter, endeavoured to mitigate the ire of Venus in this sort.

"What is the cause, madame, or how hath your son so offended, that you should so greatly accuse his love, and blame him by reason that he is amorous? and why should you seek the death of her, whom he doth fancy? We most humbly entreat you to pardon his fault, if he have accorded to the mind of any maiden. What, do not you know that he is a young man? or have you forgotten of what years he is? doth he seem always to you to be a child? You are his mother, and a kind woman, will you continually search out his dalliance? Will you blame his luxury? Will you bridle his love, and will you reprehend your own art and delights in him? What God or man is he, that can endure that you should sow or disperse your seed of love in every place, and to make a restraint thereof within your own doors? Certes, you will be the cause of the suppression of the public places of young dames."

In this sort these Goddesses endeavoured to pacify her mind, and to excuse Cupid with all their power, although he were absent, for fear of his darts and shafts of love. But Venus would in no wise assuage her heat; but thinking that they did but trifle and taunt at her injuries, she departed from them, and took her voyage towards the sea in all haste.

In the mean season Psyche hurled herself hither and thither, to seek for her husband; the rather because she thought, that if he would not be appeased with the sweet flattery of his wife, yet he would take mercy upon her at her servile and continual prayers. And, espying a church on the top of a high hill, she said: "What can I tell whether my husband and master be there or no?" Wherefore she went thitherward, and with great pain and travail, moved by hope, after that she climbed to the top of the mountain, she came to the temple and went in: whereas, behold, she espied sheafs of corn lying on a heap, blades wreathed like garlands, and reeds of barley; moreover she saw hooks, scythes, sickles and other instruments to reap, but everything lay out of order, and as it were cast in by the hands of labourers; which when Psyche saw, she gathered up and put everything duly in order, thinking that she would not despise or contemn the Temples of any of the Gods, but rather get the favour and benevolence of them all. By and by Ceres came in and beholding her busy and curious in her chapel, cried out afar off, and said: "O Psyche, needful of mercy, Venus searcheth for thee in every place to revenge herself and to punish thee grievously, but thou hast more mind to be here, and carest for nothing less than for thy safety." Then Psyche fell on her knees before her, watering her feet with her tears, wiping the ground with her hair, and with great weeping and lamentation desired pardon, saying: "O great and holy Goddess, I pray thee by thy plenteous and liberal right hand, by thy joyful ceremonies of harvest, by the secrets of thy

sacrifice, by the flying chariots of thy Dragons, by the tillage of the ground of Sicily which thou hast invented, by the marriage of Proserpina, by the diligent inquisition of thy daughter, and by the other secrets which are within the temple of Eleusis in the land of Athens: take pity on me thy servant Psyche, and let me hide myself a few days amongst these sheafs of corn, until the ire of so great a goddess be past, or until that I be refreshed of my great labour and travail." Then answered Ceres: "Verily, Psyche, I am greatly moved by thy prayers and tears, and desire with all my heart to aid thee; but if I should suffer thee to be hidden here, I should incur the displeasure of my cousin, with whom I have made a treaty of peace, and an ancient promise of amity: wherefore I advise thee to depart hence, and take it not in evil part in that I will not suffer thee to abide and remain within my temple."

Then Psyche driven away contrary to her hope, was double afflicted with sorrow, and so she returned back again. And behold, she perceived afar off in a valley a temple standing within a forest, fair and curiously wrought; and minding to overpass no place, whither better hope did direct her, and to the intent she would desire the pardon of every God, she approached nigh to the sacred doors, whereas she saw precious riches and vestments engraven with letters of gold, hanging upon branches of trees, and the posts of the temple, testifying the name of the Goddess Juno to whom they were dedicated. Then she kneeled down upon her knees, and embracing the altar with her hands, and wiping her tears, gan pray in this sort. "O dear spouse and sister of the great God Jupiter, which art adored and worshipped among the great temples of Samos, called upon by women with child, worshipped at high Carthage, because thou werest brought from heaven by the Lion, the rivers of the flood Inachus do celebrate thee, and know that thou art the wife of the great God and the Goddess of Goddesses. All the East part of the world hath thee in veneration, all the world calleth thee Lucina: I pray thee to be mine advocate in my tribulations, deliver me from the great danger which pursueth me, and save me that am wearied with so long labours and sorrow, for I know that it is thou that succourest and helpest such women as are with child and in danger." Then Juno, hearing the prayers of Psyche, appeared unto her in all her royalty, saying: "Certes, Psyche, I would gladly help thee, but I am ashamed to do anything contrary to the will of my daughter-in-law Venus, whom always I have loved as mine own child; moreover I shall incur the danger of the law intituled *De servo Corrupto*, whereby I am forbidden to retain any servant fugitive against the will of his master."

Then Psyche, cast off likewise by Juno, as without all hope of the recovery of her husband, reasoned with herself in this sort: "Now what comfort or remedy is left to my afflictions, whenas my prayers will nothing avail with the Goddesses? What shall I do? Whither shall I go?

In what cave or darkness shall I hide myself to avoid the furor of Venus? Why do I not take a good heart and offer myself with humility unto her whose anger I have wrought? what do I know whether he, whom I seek for, be in the house of his mother or no?" Thus being in doubt, poor Psyche prepared herself to her own danger, and devised how she might make her orison and prayer unto Venus.

After that Venus was weary with searching by sea and land for Psyche, she returned toward heaven, and commanded that one should prepare her chariot, which her husband Vulcan gave unto her by reason of marriage, so finely wrought that neither gold nor silver could be compared to the brightness thereof. Four white pigeons guided the chariot with great diligence, and when Venus was entered in, a number of sparrows flew chirping about, making sign of joy, and all other kind of birds sang sweetly for showing the coming of the great Goddess: the clouds gave place, the heavens opened and received her joyfully, the birds that followed nothing feared the eagles, hawks and other ravenous fowl in the air. Incontinently she went into the royal palace of the God Jupiter, and with proud and bold petition, demanded the service of Mercury in certain of her affairs, whereunto Jupiter consented. Then with much joy she descended from Heaven with Mercury, and gave him an earnest charge to put in execution his words, saying: "O my brother, born in Arcadia, thou knowest well that I (who am thy sister) did never enterprise to do anything without thy presence, thou knowest also how long I have sought for a girl and cannot find her, wherefore there resteth nothing else save that thou with thy trumpet do pronounce the reward to such as take her. See thou put in execution my commandment, and declare, that whatsoever he be that retaineth her wittingly against my will shall not defend himself by any mean or excusation." Which when she had spoken, she delivered unto him a label wherein was contained the name of Psyche and the residue of his publication, which done she departed away to her lodging. By and by Mercury (not delaying the matter) proclaimed throughout all the world, that whatsoever he were that could tell any tidings of a King's fugitive daughter, the servant of Venus, named Psyche, should bring word to Mercury, and for reward of his pains he should receive seven sweet cosses of Venus. After that Mercury had pronounced these things, every man was inflamed with desire to search out Psyche.

This proclamation was the cause that put away all doubt from Psyche, who was scantly come in sight of the house of Venus, but one of her servants called Custom came out, who espying Psyche cried with a loud voice: "O wicked harlot as thou art, now at length thou shalt know that thou hast a mistress above thee. What, dost thou make thyself ignorant as thou didst not understand what travel we have taken in searching for thee? I am glad that thou art come into my hands; thou art now in the gulf of Hell, and shalt abide the pain and punishment of thy great con-

tumacy." And therewithal she took her by the hair, and brought her before the presence of the goddess Venus.

When Venus espied her she began to laugh, and as angry persons accustom to do, she shaked her head and scratched her right ear, saying: "O Goddess, Goddess, you are now come at length to visit your mother, or else to see your husband that is in danger of death by your means, be you assured I will handle you like a daughter; where be my maidens Sorrow and Sadness?" To whom, when they came, she delivered Psyche to be cruelly tormented; then they fulfilled the commandment of their mistress, and after they had piteously scourged her with whips and rods, they presented her again before Venus. Then she began to laugh again, saying: "Behold she thinketh that by reason of her great belly, which she hath gotten by playing the whore, to move me to pity, and to make me a grandmother to her child. Am not I happy, that in the flourishing time of all mine age shall be called a grandmother, and the son of a vile harlot shall be accounted the nephew of Venus? Howbeit I am a fool to term him by the name of son, since as the marriage was made between unequal persons, in the fields without witnesses, and not by the consent of their parents, wherefore the marriage is illegitimate, and the child, that shall be born, a bastard, if we fortune to suffer thee to live till thou be delivered."

When Venus had spoken these words she leaped upon the face of poor Psyche, and, tearing her apparel, took her violently by the hair, and dashed her head upon the ground. Then she took a great quantity of wheat, barley meal, poppy seed, peas, lentils and beans, and mingled them all together on a heap, saying: "Thou evil-favoured girl, thou seemest unable to get the grace of thy lover by no other means but only by diligent and painful service, wherefore I will prove what thou canst do; see that thou separate all these grains one from another, disposing them orderly in their quality, and let it be done before night." When she had appointed this task unto Psyche, she departed to a great banquet that was prepared that day.

But Psyche went not about to dissever the grain, as being a thing impossible to be brought to pass, by reason it lay so confusedly scattered; but being astonished at the cruel commandment of Venus, sat still and said nothing. Then the little pismere the Emmot, taking pity of her great difficulty and labour, cursing the cruelness of the wife of Jupiter and of so evil a mother, ran about hither and thither, and called to her all the ants of the country, saying: "I pray you, my friends, ye quick sons of the ground, the mother of all things, take mercy on this poor maid espoused to Cupid, who is in great danger of her person. I pray you help her with all diligence." Incontinently one came after another dissevering and dividing the grain, and after that they had put each kind of corn in order they ran away again in all haste.

When night came, Venus returned home from the banquet well tippled with wine, smelling of balm, and crowned with garlands of roses, who when she espied what Psyche had done, gan say: "This is not the labour of thy hands, but rather of his that is amorous of thee." Then she gave her a morsel of brown bread, and went to sleep.

In the mean season Cupid was closed fast in the most surest chamber of the house, partly because he should not hurt himself with wanton dalliance, and partly because he should not speak with his love: so these two lovers were divided one from another.

When night was passed, Venus called Psyche and said: "Seest thou yonder forest that extendeth out in length with the river? There be great sheep shining like gold, and kept by no manner of person: I command thee that thou go thither and bring me home some of the wool of their fleeces." Psyche arose willingly, not to do her commandment, but to throw herself headlong into the water to end her sorrow. Then a green reed, inspired by divine inspiration with a gracious tune and melody, gan say: "O Psyche, I pray thee not to trouble or pollute my water by the death of thee, and yet beware that thou go not towards the terrible sheep of this coast, until such time as the heat of the sun be past; for when the sun is in his force, then seem they most dreadful, and furious with their sharp horns, their stony foreheads, and their gaping throats wherewith they arm themselves to the danger of mankind: but until the midday is past and the heat assuaged, and until they have refreshed themselves in the river, thou mayst hide thyself here by me under this great plane-tree; and as soon as their great fury is past, thou mayst go among the thickets and bushes under the woodside and gather the locks of their golden fleeces, which thou shalt find hanging upon the briars." Thus spake the gentle and benign reed, showing a mean to Psyche to save her life, which she bare well in memory, and with all diligence went and gathered up such locks as she found, and put them in her apron and carried them home to Venus: howbeit the danger of this second labour did not please her, nor give her sufficient witness of the good service of Psyche, but with a sour resemblance of laughter, she said: "Of certainty I know that this is not thy fact, but I will prove if thou be of so stout a courage and singular prudence as thou seemst."

Then Venus spake unto Psyche again, saying: "Seest thou the top of yonder great hill, from whence there runneth down water of black and deadly colour, which nourisheth the floods of Styx and Cocytus? I charge thee to go thither and bring me a vessel of that water." Wherewithal she gave her a bottle of crystal, menacing and threatening her rigorously.

Then poor Psyche went in all haste to the top of the mountain, rather to end her life than to fetch any water; and when she was come up to the ridge of the hill, she perceived that it was impossible to bring it to pass, for she saw a great rock gushing out most horrible fountains of waters,

which ran down and fell by many stops and passages into the valley beneath. On each side she saw great dragons, stretching out their long and bloody necks, that never slept, but appointed to keep the river there: the waters seemed to themselves likewise saying: "Away, away, what wilt thou do? Fly, fly or else thou wilt be slain." Then Psyche, seeing the impossibility of this affair, stood still as though she were transformed into stone; and although she was present in body, yet was she absent in spirit and sense, by reason of the great peril which she saw; in so much that she could not comfort herself with weeping, such was the present danger she was in.

But the royal bird of great Jupiter, the Eagle, remembering his old service, which he had done, whenas by the prick of Cupid he brought up the boy Ganymede to the heavens, to be made the butler of Jupiter, and minding to show the like service in the person of the wife of Cupid, came from the high house of the skies, and said unto Psyche: "O simple woman, without all experience, dost thou think to get or dip up any drop of this dreadful water? No, no, assure thyself thou art never able to come nigh it, for the Gods themselves do greatly fear at the sight thereof. What! have you not heard that it is a custom among men to swear by the puissance of the Gods: And the Gods do swear by the majesty of the river Styx? But give me thy bottle"; and suddenly he took it, and filled it with the water of the river, and taking his flight through those cruel and horrible dragons, brought it unto Psyche: who being very joyful thereof, presented it to Venus, who would not be appeased, but menacing more and more, said: "What! thou seemest unto me a very Witch and Enchantress, that bringest these things to pass; howbeit thou shalt do one thing more. Take this box and go to Hell to Proserpina, and desire her to send me a little of her beauty, as much as will serve me the space of one day, and say that such as I had is consumed away since my son fell sick; but return again quickly, for I must dress myself therewithal, and go to the theatre of the Gods." Then poor Psyche perceived the end of all her fortune, thinking verily that she should never return, and not without cause, as she was compelled to go to the gulf and furies of Hell. Wherefore without any further delay, she went up to a high tower to throw herself down headlong, thinking that it was the next and readiest way to Hell, but the Tower, as inspired, spake unto her, saying: "O poor miser, why goest thou about to slay thyself? why dost thou rashly yield unto thy last peril and danger? know thou that if thy spirit be once separate from thy body, thou shalt surely go to Hell, but never to return again; wherefore hearken to me. Lacedaemon, a city of Greece, is not far hence. Go thou thither and inquire for the hill Tænarus, whereas thou shalt find a hole leading to Hell, even to the palace of Pluto: but take heed that thou go not with empty hands to that place of darkness; but carry two sops sodden in the flour of barley and honey in thy hands, and

two halfpence in thy mouth; and when thou hast passed a good part of that way, thou shalt see a lame Ass carrying of wood, and a lame fellow driving him, who will desire thee to give him up the sticks that fall down, but pass thou on and do nothing; by and by thou shalt come unto the river of Hell whereas Charon is ferryman, who will first have his fare paid him, before he will carry the souls over the river in his boat. Whereby you may see that avarice reigneth amongst the dead; neither Charon nor Pluto will do anything for nought. For if it be a poor man that would pass over, and lacketh money, he shall be compelled to die in his journey before they will show him any relief. Wherefore deliver to carrion Charon one of the halfpence, which thou bearest for thy passage, and let him receive it out of thy mouth. And it shall come to pass as thou sittest in the boat, thou shalt see an old man swimming on the top of the river holding up his deadly hands, and desiring thee to receive him into the bark, but have no regard to his piteous cry. When thou art passed over the flood, thou shalt espy old women spinning who will desire thee to help them, but beware thou do not consent unto them in any case, for these and like baits and traps will Venus set to make thee let fall one of thy sops: and think not that the keeping of thy sops is a light matter, for if thou lose one of them thou shalt be assured never to return again to this world. Then thou shalt see a great and marvellous dog with three heads, barking continually at the souls of such as enter in; by reason he can do them no other harm, he lieth day and night before the gate of Proserpine and keepeth the house of Pluto with great diligence, to whom if thou cast one of thy sops, thou mayst have access to Proserpina without all danger. She will make thee good cheer, and entertain thee with delicate meat and drink, but sit thou upon the ground and desire brown bread, and then declare thy message unto her; and when thou hast received such beauty as she giveth, in thy return appease the rage of the dog with thy other sop, and give thy other halfpenny to covetous Charon, and come the same way again into the world as thou wentest. But above all things have a regard that thou look not in the box, neither be not too curious about the treasure of the divine beauty."

In this manner the Tower spake unto Psyche, and advertised her what she should do: and immediately she took two halfpence, two sops, and all things necessary, and went to the mountain Tænarus to go towards Hell.

After that Psyche had passed by the lame Ass, paid her halfpenny for passage, neglected the old man in the river, denied to help the women spinning, and filled the ravenous mouth of the dog with a sop, she came to the chamber of Proserpina. There Psyche would not sit in any royal seat, nor eat any delicate meats, but kneeling at the feet of Proserpina, only contented with coarse bread, declared her message, and after she had received a mystical secret in the box she departed, and stopped the mouth of the dog with the other sop, and paid the boatman the other halfpenny.

When Psyche was returned from Hell to the light of the world, she was ravished with great desire, saying: "Am not I a fool that knowing that I carry here the divine beauty, will not take a little thereof to garnish my face, to please my lover withal?" And by and by she opened the box, where she could perceive no beauty nor anything else, save only an infernal and deadly sleep, which immediately invaded all her members as soon as the box was uncovered, in such sort that she fell down on the ground, and lay there as a sleeping corpse.

But Cupid being now healed of his wound and malady, not able to endure the absence of Psyche, got him secretly out at a window of the chamber where he was enclosed, and, receiving his wings, took his flight towards his loving wife; whom when he had found he wiped away the sleep from her face, and put it again into the box, and awaked her with the tip of one of his arrows, saying: "O wretched caitiff, behold thou werest well-nigh perished again with thy overmuch curiosity; well, go thou, and do thy message to my mother, and in the mean season I will provide for all things accordingly." Wherewithal he took his flight into the air, and Psyche brought her present to Venus.

Cupid being more and more in love with Psyche, and fearing the displeasure of his mother, did pierce into the heavens, and arrived before Jupiter to declare his cause. Then Jupiter after that he had eftsoons embraced him, gan say in this manner: "O my well-beloved son, although thou hast not given due reverence and honour unto me as thou oughtest to do, but hast rather soiled and wounded this my breast, whereby the laws and order of the elements and planets be disposed, with continual assaults of terrene luxury and against all laws, and the discipline Julia, and the utility of the public weal, in transforming my divine beauty into serpents, fire, savage beasts, birds and bulls. Howbeit, remembering my modesty, and that I have nourished thee with mine own proper hands, I will do and accomplish all thy desire, so that thou canst beware of spiteful and envious persons. And if there be any excellent maiden of comely beauty in the world, remember yet the benefit which I shall show unto thee, by recompense of her love towards me again." When he had spoken these words, he commanded Mercury to call all the Gods to council, and if any of the celestial powers did fail of appearance, he should be condemned in ten thousand pounds: which sentence was such a terror unto all the Gods, that the high theatre was replenished, and Jupiter began to speak in this sort: "O ye Gods, registered in the books of the Muses, you all know this young man Cupid, whom I have nourished with mine own hands, whose raging flames of his first youth I thought best to bridle and restrain. It sufficeth in that he is defamed in every place for his adulterous living, wherefore all occasion ought to be taken away by mean of marriage: he hath chosen a maiden that fancieth him well, and hath bereaved her of her virginity, let him have her still and

possess her according to his own pleasure." Then he returned to Venus, and said: "And you, my daughter, take you no care, neither fear the dishonour of your progeny and estate, neither have regard in that it is a mortal marriage, for it seemeth unto me just, lawful, and legitimate by the law civil."

Incontinently after, Jupiter commanded Mercury to bring up Psyche, the spouse of Cupid, into the palace of heaven. And then he took a pot of immortality, and said: "Hold, Psyche, and drink to the end thou mayst be immortal, and that Cupid may be thine everlasting husband."

By and by the great banquet and marriage feast was sumptuously prepared. Cupid sat down with his dear spouse between his arms: Juno likewise with Jupiter, and all the other Gods in order. Ganymede filled the pot of Jupiter, and Bacchus served the rest. Their drink was nectar, the wine of the Gods. Vulcan prepared supper, the Hours decked up the house with roses and other sweet smells, the Graces threw about balm, the Muses sang with sweet harmony, Apollo tuned pleasantly to the harp, Venus danced finely, Satyr and Pan played on their pipes; and thus Psyche was married to Cupid, and after she was delivered of a child, whom we call Pleasure.

Ancient India

INTRODUCTION

SANSKRIT is the classical literary language of the Hindus of ancient India. With few exceptions, the varied and extensive literature that began in prehistoric times with the *Vedas* and lasted almost to the dawn of the European Renaissance, was written in Sanskrit.

The *Vedas* were the religious books of the Hindus. The earliest of these belong probably to pre-Homeric times. Even before the so-called epic period, which began perhaps about 500 B.C., there were narratives that contained at least the germs of those tales that were later incorporated into the epics, dramas, and shorter poems of the classical period.

The two great epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, are full of romantic narratives. Among the very earliest stories in Sanskrit are the short fables, apologues, and anecdotes now known as the *Jataka*, or Buddhist "birth-stories," which existed as early as the Fourth Century, B.C.

Sanskrit literature abounds in short stories, the most famous of which are found in the *Panchatantra*. Many of these, with modifications and additions, were incorporated into the later and almost equally famous collections, the *Katha-sarit-Sagara*, and the *Hitopadesa*.

The longer tale, or short novel, as an art-form, can be found in the two great epics just referred to; it was developed in the derivative and more or less imitative court-epics, or *Kavyas*, the earliest of which date from about 200 B.C., and the latest some thirteen centuries later.

It was in the classical period that the long prose romance, or novel, flourished. Several of these, dating from the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Centuries, A.D., still survive. Dandin, Subandhu, and Bana, are among the best-known writers of this sort of composition.

Regarding the source of the Sanskrit stories, there has been an immense amount of speculation, a great deal of which is interesting, but for our purposes not especially valuable. What is far better established than the theories of scholars on their origin, is the fact of their influence. The Sanskrit tale has found its way into the literatures and folk-lore of practically every nation in the world.

DANDIN

(Latter half 7th Century, A.D.)

Dandin is believed to have flourished in the latter half of the Seventh Century A.D. Besides *The Adventures of the Ten Princes* he wrote a treatise called *The Mirror of Poetry*, on literary composition. He was, in Professor Ryder's words, a "skilful poet, an erudite and ingenious lover of literature; the master of a prose style surpassingly beautiful. This is all that we know."

The Adventures of the Ten Princes is a novel in prose, though nearly all of its fourteen chapters are separate narratives. Dandin wrote only eight of these; the others were added by an unknown author.

The story printed below is a particularly good example of the light-hearted and somewhat sophisticated attitude toward life of an artist who delighted in playing with words and ideas. Here is not a trace of moralising: the tale is written solely to amuse and interest the reader.

The translation here used was made especially by Prof. Arthur W. Ryder, for his edition of the entire novel. This is to be published shortly by the University of Chicago Press, by whose permission and that of the translator it is included in the present volume. The story has never before been published in an English translation.

APAHARAVARMAN'S ADVENTURE

(from *The Adventures of Ten Princes*)

YOUR Majesty, on the day when you plunged into Devil's Hole in order to serve a Brahman, and all your friends set out in search of you, I too roamed the earth. Now I learned from a certain group of gossipers that in the Anga country, on the bank of the Ganges outside the capital Champa, there lived a great sage named Marichi in whom potent austerities had begotten divine insight; and I travelled to that region, desirous of learning from him your whereabouts. In his hermitage I discovered under a baby mango a hermit pale with depression of spirit, from whom I received the attentions due a guest. Then after a moment's rest, I said: "Where is saintly Marichi? I desire to learn from him the route of a friend who had occasion to make a distant journey. The sage has an international reputation for miraculous powers of penetration."

With a deep-drawn, burning sigh he told this tale: "Such a sage there was in this hermitage. To him one day there came in deep dejection a

member of the frail sisterhood, named Kamamanjari. She had fairly won her name as gem of the Anga capital, but her breasts were starred with tear-drops and her dishevelled hair swept the ground as she paid him homage. At the same moment a group of her relatives, headed by the mother, came running compassionately behind her, and fell to the ground in a long line before the hermit. That merciful creature consoled them with his liquid tones and asked the courtezan the source of her distress. And she, with seeming shame, despondency, and dignity, replied: 'Holy sir, your servant is a vessel of tribulation in this life, yet, in hope of a blessed resurrection, takes refuge at your holy feet, known as a defence of the afflicted.'

"At this point the mother lifted her hands, touched the earth with hair dappled with grey, lifted her head, and spoke: 'Holy sir, this your maid-servant acquaints you with my own wrong doing. And this wrong doing of mine lay in the performance of my obvious duty. For obvious duty is as follows for the mother of a *fille de joie:* care of her daughter's person from the hour of birth; nourishment by a diet so regulated as to develop stateliness, vigor, complexion, intelligence, while harmonizing the humors, gastric calefaction, and secretions; not permitting her to see too much even of her father after the fifth year; festive ritual on birthdays and holy days; instruction in the arts of flirtation, both major and minor; thorough training in dance, song, instrumental music, acting, painting, also judgment of foods, perfumes, flowers, not forgetting writing and graceful speech; a conversational acquaintance with grammar, with logical inference and conclusion; profound skill in money-making, sport, and betting on cockfights or chess; assiduous use of go-betweens in the passages of coquetry; display of numerous well-dressed attendants at religious or secular celebrations; careful selection of teachers to insure success at unpremeditated vocal and other exhibitions; advertising in a national scale by a staff of trained specialists; publicity for beauty-marks through astrologers and such; eulogistic mention in gatherings of men about town of her beauty, character, accomplishments, charm, and sweetness by hangers-on, gay dogs, buffoons, female religionists and others; raising her price considerably when she has become an object of desire to young gentlemen; surrender to a lover of independent fortune, a philogynist or one intoxicated by seeing her charms, a gentleman eminent for rank, figure, youth, money, vigor, purity, generosity, cleverness, gallantry, art, character, and sweetness of disposition; delivery, with gracious exaggeration of value received, to one less affluent, but highly virtuous and cultivated (the alternative is levying on his natural guardians, after informal union with such a gentleman); collection of bad debts by vamping judge and jury; mothering a lover's daughter; abstraction by ingenious tricks; of money left in an admirer's possession after payment for periodical pleasures; steady quarrelling with a defaulter or miser; stimulation of the

spirit of generosity in an over-thrifty adorer by the incentive of jealousy; repulse of the impecunious by biting speeches, by public taunts, by cutting his daughters, and by other embarrassing habits, as well as by simple contempt; continued clinging to the openhanded, the chivalrous, the blameless, the wealthy, with full consideration of the interrelated chances of money and misery.

"'Besides, a courtezan should show readiness indeed, but no devotion to a lover. And even if fond of him, she should not disobey mother or grandmother. In spite of all, the girl disregards her God-given vocation, and has spent a whole month of amusement — at her own expense! — with a Brahman youth, a fellow from nowhere whose face is his fortune. Her snippiness has offended several perfectly solvent admirers, and has pauperized her own family. And when I scolded her and told her: 'This is no kind of a scheme. This isn't pretty,' she was angry and took to the woods. And if she is obstinate, this whole family will stay right here and starve to death. There is nothing else to do.' And the mother wept.

"Then the hermit spoke to the cocotte: 'My dear young woman, be assured that life in the forest is difficult. Its reward is either final salvation or a period in Paradise. Now of these the former is grounded in profound insight and is, as a rule, hardly attainable; while the latter is easy for anybody who fulfills the duties of his station. You had best resign your visionary ambition and abide by your mother's judgment.'

"But she impatiently rejected this sympathetic counsel, saying: 'If I find no refuge at your holy feet, may the god of fire provide a refuge for my misery.'

"So the hermit, after some reflection, said to the courtezan's mother: 'Go home for a time. Wait a few days, until this delicate creature, wonted to pleasant luxury, grows disgusted with the hardships of life in the forest, and with the aid of repeated homilies from me, returns to normalcy.' And her relatives withdrew, assenting.

"Now the courtezan grudged no devotion to the holy hermit. She wore a neat and simple costume, was not overattentive to ornament, watered the seedling trees, took pains to gather bunches of flowers for ceremonies of worship, made a pleasing variety of offerings, provided perfumes, garlands, incense, lamps, dance, song, and instrumental music in honor of Love's chastiser, Shiva, drew the hermit into corners to discuss the relations of the three things worth living for (virtue, money, and love), and discoursed decorously of the Supreme Being. In a surprisingly short time she had him in love.

"One day, seeing that he was secretly smitten, she said with a little smile: 'Why, the world is a fool even to consider money and love in comparison with virtue.' 'Tell me, my soul,' said Marichi, 'by what percentage you value virtue above money and love.' Thus encouraged, but slow and shy, she began:

"'A poor, ignorant thing like me! Can I teach a holy hermit the bigness or littleness of virtue, money, and love? Still, your question is just one more kindness to a servant. So listen. Of course, without virtue there *isn't* any money or love. But virtue without those things gives us blissful felicity, and we can get it by simple introspection. It doesn't depend so much on external instruments, the way money and love do. And if nourished by seeing the real Truth, it isn't hurt if you pursue — just a little, you know — money and love. Or if it is, it is restored without much trouble, and you win a special blessing by avoiding that sin in future. For example: Brahma pursued Tilottama, Shiva violated a thousand wives of hermits, Vishnu flirted with sixteen thousand girls, Prajapati offered love even to his own daughter, Indra was Ahalya's paramour, the moon-god fouled his teacher's bed, the sun-god debauched a mare, the wind-god seduced the wife of a monkey, Brihaspati ran after Utathya's wife, Parashara deflowered a fisherman's daughter, his son intrigued with a brother's wife, Atri had dealings with a doe. And when immortals do all those things, such devil's tricks don't injure their virtue, because they have the power of Truth. And when a soul is purified by virtue, dirt never sticks, any more than in the sky. So I feel that money and love don't touch even one per cent of virtue.'

"Having listened to this, the sage felt the tide of passion surge, and he said: 'My pet, you are truly wise: with those who have vision of the Truth, virtue is not shackled by the indulgence of sense. But from birth I have never studied the doctrine of money and love. I ought to learn their nature, attendant conditions, and reward.'

"'Well,' said she, 'the nature of money is to be earned, multiplied, and saved; its attendant conditions are agriculture, cattle-raising, trade, peace, war, and so forth; its reward is charity to the deserving. Love's nature lies in an exquisite contact with ineffable joy in a man and a woman whose minds concentrate on sense-experience. Its attendant conditions are all that is blissful and blazing in this contact. And its reward is a manifest and self-communicated gladness, intensely delightful, arising from reciprocal tangency, sweet memory, occasioning self-approbation, supreme. For love's sake, men, even men who live in the most sacred places, endure grievous martyrdoms, great sacrifices of money, terrible battles, sea-voyages and other fearful dangers.'

"Hereupon, were it constraining destiny, or the woman's smartness, or his own dulness, he forgot his vows and yielded to her fascination. She put the poor booby in a carriage and carried him far away along the splendid public street to her own home in the city. And drums were beaten with the announcement: 'Tomorrow is Love's festival.'

"The next day, when the sage had been bathed and anointed, had assumed a pretty garland, had practised lovers' manners and so turned his back on his true profession that he grieved if a moment passed with-

out her, she took him along the gaudy public street to a holiday crowd in a wooded garden, where the king sat among hundreds of young ladies. And when the king said with a smile: 'My dear, be seated with His Holiness,' she made a fluttering curtsy, smiled, and sat down.

"Thereupon a most beautiful woman rose, lifted her joined hands, and curtsied to the king, saying: 'Your Majesty, she has won the bet. From this day I am her slave.' Then the crowd raised a racket rooted in wonder and delight. The king too was delighted and dismissed the courtezan with gracious gifts of precious stones in settings and a great train of attendants, while the most eminent ladies of her profession and the most prominent citizens gave her a multitudinous ovation.

"She, however, before going home, said to the sage: 'My duty to you, holy sir. You have put your servant under no transient obligation. You may now resume your vocation.' 'My darling,' he cried, pricked by love as by a knife-point, 'what does it mean? How can you be so cynical? What has become of your superlative fondness for me?'

"'Holy sir,' she replied with a smile, 'you saw the girl who just confessed defeat before the royal retinue. She and I once had a tiff, and she said with a sneer: 'You boast as if you had seduced Marichi.' So I wagered my freedom and went into the business. And I won. Thank you so much.'

"Thus cast off, the poor innocent repented and listlessly returned to the woods. And I, dear sir, am the wretched man whom she treated so. The whore who had the power to inspire passion, has herself, by withdrawing it, encouraged religion. Soon I shall be able to bring myself to attend your business. Till then, remain in Champa, the Anga capital."

Now the sun went to his setting, as if fearful of touching the darkness that drifted from the hermit's soul; the red flare of passion left the sage to gleam as evening twilight; the clusters of day-blooming lilies shrank together as if his tale had made them indifferent to life. And I, having accepted the poor fellow's offer of aid, sat with him, telling twilight tales, shared his bed for the night, and when the red rays of the waking sun — mocking the blossoming twigs of the wishing-tree — shot like a forest fire from Sunrise Peak, I said a respectful farewell and started for the city.

In a lonely spot outside a monastery that stood beside the road, I beheld a naked Jain monk seated in a grove of red ashoka trees, careless of his religious meditations, wasted with mental misery, deserving first prize for homeliness, a pitiful presence. And I noticed that the tear-drops falling on his chest, carried lumps of dirt dislodged from his face. So I drew near, and made inquiries. "Austerities and tears," I said, "fit ill together. If it is no secret, I could wish to learn the source of your sorrow."

"Listen, kind sir," he said. "I am the eldest son of a prosperous merchant named Nidhipalita in this very Champa, and my name is Vasupalita. But my nickname is Ugly, because I *am* ugly. There is another named Handsome in town, and he is handsome; he is rich in social attractions, but ill endowed with wealth. Between him and me a quarrel was fomented on the subject of good looks and cash by such city scoundrels as pick a living out of quarrels. One day in a holiday gathering we indulged ourselves in a budget of cutting taunts, rooted in mutual disdain. The scoundrels had started the squabble themselves, but they claimed to appease it by laying down this principle: 'Neither looks nor cash is the proof of manhood; but he is the best man whose youthful vigor attracts the gayest girls. Now Kamamanjari is the nonpareil among these young persons. He whom she prefers, may fly the flag of fortune.' We agreed and sent her our proposals.

"Now it was I who awakened a loving rapture in the creature. At least, she came to me, as he and I sat there, darted at my person a dark-eyed, sidelong glance that was both flower and fetter, and caused my embarrassed rival's face to fall. I fancied myself happy, and made her mistress of my money, of my house, of my household, of my person, of my life. She left me a loin-cloth. Cast off as a beggar, the target of universal ridicule, unable to endure the gibes of the city's dignitaries. I welcomed instruction concerning the path of salvation from a certain monk in this heretic monastery; then, considering how natural was such a costume for those emerging from a house of evil fame, I felt a surge of religious despair, and abandoned the loin-cloth, too.

"But presently, when the dirt caked on my person, when my hair was plucked till it hurt horribly, when I suffered the exquisite tortures of hunger and thirst, when even in standing, sitting, lying, and eating I was cramped like a new-caught elephant in disciplinary chains, I pondered profoundly: 'I am of Brahman origin. It is irreligious in me to condescend to this heretical course. My forefathers trod the path prescribed by revelation and sacred tradition. And I am sunk so low as to wear scandal-breeding canonicals, to invite condign chastisement, and even — by hearing constant blasphemies against Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, and other true gods — to harvest hell when I am dead. Such doctrine, fruitless, deceitful, false! To think that I should practice it as true!' With that estimate of my own perversity, I betook myself to this lonely clump of ashokas, and here I weep copiously."

At this point I pitied him and said: "Be patient, sir. Remain here yet a little while. I will endeavor to persuade that female to make voluntary restitution of your possessions. There are ways and means." So I consoled him and rose to take farewell.

Even while entering the city, I learned from street gossip that the town was full of skinflints and capitalists; and since I desired to bring

these gentry to orthodox thinking by revealing the perishable nature of riches, I resolved to tread the path of scientific thievery. I did not sit down until I had entered a dive and mingled with the professionals. I found no end of enjoyment observing their skill in all the twenty-five branches of the art of gambling; their sleight of hand, extremely difficult to detect, over the dice-board; the accompanying sneers and jeers; their death-defying truculence; their systems (chiefly argument, force, and bluff) devised to gain a gambler's confidence and calculated to win the stakes; their flattery of the strong; their threats toward the weak; their cleverness in picking partners; their fantastic means of allurement; the varied wagers proposed; their magnanimous way of dividing the cash; the intermittent buzz of talk, largely obscene; and much besides.

Now when a player made a careless throw, I laughed a little. But his opponent seemed to flare up, looking at me with an eye red with wrath, and shouting: "Man, you tell him how to play when you laugh. Let this uneducated duffer go. I'll just play with you — you seem a smart one." The proprietor offered no objection: he clinched with me, and I won sixteen thousand dinars. Half I gave to the proprietor and his staff; half I pocketed. Then I rose, and with me rose delighted congratulations from the company. I humored the proprietor's invitation, and shared a most noble banquet in his establishment. But he who had occasioned my gambling incarnation, became a friend, trustworthy as a second heart. His name was Vimardaka.

From his lips I studied every house in the city, with emphasis on wealth, occupation, and character; then in a darkness black as the stain on Shiva's neck, clad in the concealment of a black cloak, girding on a sharp sword, provided with a varied kit — trowel, scissors, tweezers, dummy, magic powder, trick lamp, measuring-tape, hook, cord, dark lantern, bee-basket, and other tools — I visited the house of a miserly capitalist, breached the wall, penetrated the interior unperceived through an opening narrow as a telescope, all as unconcerned as if entering my own dwelling, appropriated considerable capital, and departed.

On the public street, dense with palpable darkness from black and crowding clouds, I suddenly perceived a momentary splendor like a lightning flash. This resolved itself into a young woman wearing gleaming gems; she drew near, having issued forth at that spacious hour, and seemed the city's guardian goddess angered at theft in the city.

And when I sympathetically inquired: "What is your name? What is your goal, my soul?" she stammered this terrified reply: "In this city, sir, lives a most worthy merchant, Kuberadatta. I am his daughter. At my birth my father promised me as wife to a certain Dhanamitra, a wealthy youth of our own city. He, however, showed an extraordinary nobility: when his parents perished, with his own property he purchased poverty (if the expression is permissible) from a throng of jobbers. As a

consequence, people pleasantly tacked to him the honorable sobriquet of 'Mister Noble'; and poor as he was, he still sought my hand. But now that I am a woman, my father refuses me to a beggar, and plans to bestow me on a certain wholesaler named Arthapati — a rich man, as the name indicates. This calamity, you must know, impends at dawn of day. I knew it, and consented to a meeting with my darling. I gave my servants the slip, and through the street where I played as a girl, I go to his dwelling, a woman whose escort is love. Do not prevent me. Take this treasure." And unfastening her jewels, she handed them to me.

"You are a good girl," I said, consoling her. "Come, let me accompany you to your lover's house." But when I had taken three or four steps, the gleam of a torch stole our shroud of darkness, and a sizable squad of police fell upon us, baton and sword in hand. "Feel no fear, my dear," said I to the trembling girl. "The last resort is this arm of mine, with its friendly sword. But from regard for you I have devised a pleasant plan. I will lie here, counterfeiting the cramps of deadly poison, while you tell those fellows: 'We entered this city by night. My escort — whom you see — was stung by a serpent there at the corner of the public hall. If you have any kindly necromancer who can restore him, he would also save a helpless woman's life.'" And the maiden, there being no other way, put a terrified stammer into her tone and a storm of tears into her eyes, tremblingly tottered forward and repeated my words, while I lay counterfeiting poison cramps.

So I was examined by one of them, who fancied himself as a poison specialist. He treated me with signet-rings, charms, spells, silent prayer, and other specifics — without success. Then he reported: "It was a cobra. He is done for. You can see that his limbs are rigid and discolored, his eye is filmy, his respiration has just ceased. Weep your fill, my soul. Tomorrow we shall have a cremation. Who escapes fate?" And off he went with the others.

I rose and conducted her to Mister Noble, to whom I said: "I am a thief. I met this lady in mid-journey; she was on her way to you, escorted by a loving heart. I sympathized and brought her safe. These jewels are hers." And I gave him a gleaming mass that cleft the veil of darkness.

Mister Noble took them and said, his shyness struggling with his joy: "Sir, you have this night given me my darling, but stolen my power of speech. For I know not how to express myself. Shall I call your action unique? I should be lessening your constant character. Shall I call it unequalled by others? The comparison would limit your natural faculty, since avarice and other human failings are foreign to you. Shall I aver that you have this day breathed life into virtue? The statement would be quite discourteous to your previous glories. Shall I say that nobility has now found its true externalization? Such an assertion would

be improper, as neglecting your normal purpose. Shall I declare that your generous deed has purchased my freedom? I should insult your intelligence, implying an extravagant price for a trifle. Shall I swear that this body is yours, a return for the gift of my love? I should forget that this body, destined to death if I lost her, is also your gift. Ah, only this statement will fit the case: you must care for me from this hour, since I am your slave." And he fell at my feet.

I helped him to rise, pressed him to my breast, and said: "Dear sir, what is your present purpose?" And he replied: "Without her parents' consent I cannot marry her and live here. Therefore, this very night I plan to flee the country. Yet whom am I, to be honored by your concern?"

"Right," said I. "The discerning man does not reckon lands as native or foreign. However, this lady is exquisitely dainty, and forest trails are roughly strewn with hardships. Such an unmotivated flight from the country smacks of a certain flabbiness, both of intelligence and character. It is better to live with her happily in this very city. Come, let us take her to her own dwelling." He agreed without demur; we took her home at once, and while she served as picket, he and I stripped the house to the bare clay walls.

Then, after an expedition to conceal our booty, we fell in with policemen; and finding a must elephant kneeling beside the road, we tossed the driver off and mounted. But even as I made the animal rise, he tangled his fore feet in his neck-rope, and since he braced himself on the broad chest of the fallen driver, his great tusk was smeared with clinging gore when he pounded the police. We used him to pulverize Arthapati's house. Next, we drove him into a deserted garden, and dismounted by catching the branch of a tree. Then we started home, had a bath, and went to bed.

Presently the sun's disc was lifted; it seemed the ruby horn of splendid Sunrise Peak lifting from the sea, and was gay as a golden garland of flowers from the wishing-tree. We rose, washed our faces, repeated our morning prayers, then roamed the town agog at our exploits, and listened to the babble in the houses of bridegroom and bride. Arthapati was consoling Kuberadatta in the matter of money, but postponing for a month his marriage with the daughter of the family.

Thereupon I whispered these instructions to Dhanamitra: "Visit the Anga king, my friend, and secretly show him this wallet of choice leather, saying: 'Your Majesty surely knows me. I am Dhanamitra, only son of Vasumitra, the multimillionaire; but a throng of needy beggars stripped me, so that I became an object of derision. And when Kuberadatta, reproaching my poverty, planned to give to Arthapati his daughter, a sweet girl betrothed to me from birth, I entered an unkempt garden near the city, resolved to die of heart-ache. But a tangle-haired hermit snatched

the knife from my throat, asking: 'What is the cause of this desperate deed?' 'Poverty,' said I, 'own brother of derision.'

"Now he took pity on me, saying: 'You are a fool, my boy. There is nothing more wholly reprehensible than suicide. Good men do not destroy the soul; they use the soul to save the soul. There are many means of making money, but no means of making life by patching a cut throat. And what need? I know my thaumaturgy: I have contrived this magic wallet of choice leather which holds a lakh. With its aid I granted their desires to people during a long residence in Assam; but when envious age assailed me, I came hither, hoping to find this region a heaven on earth. I give the wallet to you. In other hands than mine it is said to work only for merchants and courtezans. Moreover, anything sinfully stolen by its owner, must first be restored; anything honestly earned must be given to gods and Brahmans. Then, if it is set in a hallowed spot and worshipped like a god, it will be found filled with gold every morning. Such is its nature.' Herewith he gave it to me and as I bowed, he vanished in a rocky cave. This priceless leather wallet I have brought, feeling that I should not make a living by it without previous report to Your Majesty. Of course, Your Majesty is the final arbiter.'

"Now the king will be quite certain to say: 'I am delighted, my dear sir. Go, and enjoy your treasure to the full.' Thereupon you will say: 'Be graciously pleased to see that nobody steals it.' This also he will assuredly promise. You will then go home, will disburse charity according to a set program, will worship the wallet each day, will fill it each night with the proceeds of robbery, and each morning will exhibit it to the populace. Presently greedy Kuberadatta, no longer caring a straw for Arthapati, will voluntarily approach you with his daughter. Next, purse-proud Arthapati will be angry and try to sue you; after which, you and I, by artful dodges, will leave him with a loin-cloth. Besides, this manoeuvre will quite conceal our own thievery."

Dhanamitra was delighted and did as I suggested. That very day Vimardaka, at my instigation, entered Arthapati's service and fanned his hostility to Mister Noble; while greedy Kuberadatta turned his back on Arthapati, obsequiously offering his daughter to Dhanamitra. And Arthapati fought back.

In these same days announcement was made that Kamamanjari's younger sister Ragamanjari was to give a musical performance in public, so that gay society gathered with tense anticipation. I was there too, with my friend Dhanamitra. And when her dance began, there was a second dance on the stage of my heart. For the archer-god lurked in the cover of the lotus-cluster which her flashing glances made, and tortured me terribly, seeming to draw power from the medley of all emotions and sentiments dramatically communicable. She seemed the city's guardian goddess angered at theft in the city as she fettered me in the twining

coils of coquettish glances darkly gleaming like blue lilies' glossy petals. After the dance, as she stood, a shining success — whether flirtatiously, or graciously, or fortuitously, I do not know — she darted at me, unobserved even by the girls, more than one peeping glance with playful fluttering of arching brows, then, with a little careless, gleaming smile, departed, still escorted by the eyes and thoughts of all. I went home, my hunger replaced by resistless longing, and feigning a headache, lay limp on my lonely bed.

Now Dhanamitra, deeply versed in the book of love, came to me with this confidential report: "My friend, that courtezan is blest indeed, to whom your heart is thus devoted. I have closely followed the course of her feelings, too; the archer-god will soon stretch her also on a bed of arrows. A meeting is simple to arrange, since you both pursue an honorable purpose. But you must know that this gay girl adopts a most elevated style, running counter to courtezan character. She declares: 'My price is virtue, not cash. Hereafter, no gentleman may hold my hand except in matrimony.' Now her sister Kamamanjari, failing in repeated dissuasion, and her mother Madhavasena sobbed out this tearful petition to the king: 'Your Majesty, we had high hopes that your servant Ragamanjari — with character, accomplishments, and cleverness to match her beauty — would fulfil our ambitions for her. But she is a complete disappointment: she breaks every family tradition; she is indifferent to money, and expects virtue as payment for youthful favors. She obstinately apes the conduct of a good woman. Now if — even at the cost of Your Majesty's high intervention — she should at last return to normal manners, it would be a sweet relief.'

"And when she still turned a deaf ear to the admonitions of the obliging king, her mother and sister besought the sovereign with importunate tears: 'If any snake should deceive and ruin the girl against our will, you must torture him to death like a thief.' So matters stand: her relatives will not consent without money, and she will show no favor to a man who offers money. You must reconcile these opposites." "There is nothing to reconcile," said I. "We will seduce her with virtue, and secretly satisfy her relatives with money."

So I won the good will of Kamamanjari's chief go-between, a certain Buddhist nun named Dharmarakshita, with such bribes as tatters and scraps; and through her mediation I struck this bargain with the cocotte — that I should steal from Mister Noble and give to her the miraculous wallet, in return for Ragamanjari. Receiving her assent, I put the matter through, then seduced Ragamanjari by my virtue, and plucked the flower of her hand.

On the evening when the theft of the magic wallet became known, in the hearing of noteworthy men about town (summoned ostensibly for another purpose) my spy Vimardaka, a nominal partizan of Arthapati,

turned upon Dhanamitra and rated him roundly. "Sir," said Dhanamitra, "what object has this barking at me in another man's quarrel? I do not recall doing you the slightest injury." "Regular purse-pride!" retorted the other, still seeming to scold. "After the other fellow has paid his honest tax for a wife, you dazzle her parents with cash and try to get the girl. Then you ask: 'What injury have I done you?' Well, everyone knows that Vimardaka is the projected life of wholesaler Arthapati. Here I am — I am ready to give my life for him. I wouldn't shrink from Brahman-murder. If I wanted to keep my eyes open just one night, I could lower the high temperature of your pride in that magic wallet." Still speaking, he was bustled away by prominent citizens, who indignantly tried to squelch him.

This occurrence, with a previous reference to the loss of the magic wallet, was reported with counterfeit distress by Dhanamitra to the king, who summoned Arthapati and privately inquired: "Sir, have you acquaintance with one Vimardaka?" "Certainly, Your Majesty," replied the booby. "He is a very close friend. What service can he render?" "Can you produce him?" asked the king. "Assuredly I can," said he and going forth, he searched minutely but vainly in his own house, among the gay girls, in the gambling dive, in the market. How could the lubber find him? Inasmuch as Vimardaka, commissioned by me, and having received from me a token by which to recognize you, my prince, started that same day for Ujjain to search for you, sir. So Arthapati, failing to find him, and feeling his own responsibility for the felony, was mad enough or frightened enough to contradict himself; and after demonstration by Dhanamitra, was seized by order of the angry king and thrown into chains.

In these same days Kamamanjari, desiring to milk the magic wallet with due regard to all conditions imposed, paid a secret visit to Mister Ugly, whom she had previously milked dry and converted into a naked heretic. She restored his entire stolen fortune and returned only after begging his forgiveness with no end of amenity. And he, his soul thus snatched from naked heresy by my pastoral ministrations, returned with extreme delight to his true religion. The lady meanwhile, in her eagerness to milk the magic wallet, stripped her house in a very few days to the bare fireplace.

Then at my suggestion, Dhanamitra confided in the king: "Your Majesty, the girl Kamamanjari is so outrageously grasping that people have fastened upon her the nickname Greedy-girl; yet today she is heedlessly throwing away her furniture, down to mortar and pestle. This I believe results from her possession of my magic wallet, for such is its nature. It is said to work only for merchants and courtezans. I have my suspicions of her." And she, with her mother was immediately summoned before the king.

I took her aside to say with simulated agitation: "Surely, madam, your

thorough and strikingly public generosity has brought you under suspicion of possessing the magic wallet. You are summoned by the Anga king to answer for this. And if repeatedly pressed, you are certain to plead its acquisition through me. Then I shall be put to death by torture. And when I am dead, your sister will cease to live. And you have become a beggar. And the magic wallet will return to Dhanamitra. This emergency is calamitous, however you face. What remedy is there?"

"Too true," replied she and her mother with tears. "Through our childish simplicity the secret is as good as out. If the king insists, though we may deny twice, thrice, even four times, we are sure to impute the theft to you. And at the mention of your name our whole family would be ruined. Well, this disgrace roots in Arthapati; and the whole capital knows our intimacy with that lumpkin. We can best shield ourselves by claiming that he gave it to us." This I approved, and the two ladies went to court.

There the king examined them, saying: "It is not decent for courtezans to pretend to charity, since it is no decently earned money that men bring to them." He hammered this point home, terrifying them by hints of the slitting of ears and noses until those two damned whores accused the wretched Arthapati of the theft. The king in a fury condemned him to death, but was restrained by none other than Dhanamitra, who respectfully pleaded: "Oh, sir, royal tradition graciously grants exemption from the death penalty to merchants guilty of such felonies. If you feel furious, confiscate the criminal's property and exile him."

Thus Dhanamitra received wide applause, the monarch was gratified, and purse-proud Arthapati, reduced to single rag, was exiled in view of the the whole city. A certain portion of his possessions the king, following a compassionate suggestion of Dhanamitra, bestowed on Kamamanjari, who, duped by the mirage of the magic wallet, had quite stripped herself. Dhanamitra married his good girl on a lucky day. And I, successful in my stratagem, filled a house with gold and gems for Ragamanjari.

But the skinflint and capitalist class in that city was so plucked that its members wandered for alms, begging bowl in hand, from house to house of the destitute class, now grown wealthy with *their* property, bestowed by me. For no man, however shrewd, can cross the line traced by fate. So in my own case: one day I was ingratiatingly offering Ragamanjari something to drink in order to end a lovers' quarrel, and when I had too often sipped the wine of her lips, sweetly and repeatedly offered, I was smitten by an intemperate madness. Now it is the nature of intemperance and enthusiasm to adopt a wrong method in habitual actions. So, as madness mounted, I cried: "In a single night I could steal all the money in this city and fill your house with it"; and repelling hundreds of humble obsecrations from my dearest, like a must elephant fiercely snapping his chain, with no great retinue but attended by a nurse named Shrigalika, I started, sword in hand, as impetuous as you please. Even

when I met policemen, I attacked them without thinking and was not particularly angry when they took me for a thief and struck me. It seemed a game. But the sword dropped from my groggy hand, so that I only killed two or three before falling, my eyes rolling and bloodshot. The nurse ran to me at once, with bleats of misery; but my enemies fettered me.

Misfortune banished madness: I was sober in a moment, and my returning wits at once admonished me: "Dear me! This is no small disaster, due to my own dementia. Besides, everyone knows that Dhanamitra is my friend, and Ragamanjari my bride. For my wrong-doing they will both be tracked down and will certainly be apprehended tomorrow. Here, however, is a scheme which, if carried through according to my directions, will preserve them, and possibly pull me out of this hole."

So, when I had mentally settled on a plan, I snarled at Shrigalika: "Be off, you lump of anility, and be damned to you! It was you who introduced that cursèd courtezan, that scaly Ragamanjari to my enemy, my pretended friend Dhanamitra, crazy over his magic wallet! Because I stole that scoundrel's magic purse and prigged your daughter's priceless jewels, I have to lose my innocent life today!"

She was supremely clever: she caught my drift, and lifting her hands, humbly approached the men. She softened them with her tear-choked tone, and begged in my hearing: "Gentlemen, please wait long enough for me to learn from him exactly what has been stolen from us." When they consented, she turned again to me, fell at my feet, and said: "Oh, sir, forgive your servant's single offence. Of course, you must hate Dhanamitra — he seduced your wife. But you ought to pardon your humble Ragamanjari — consider how long she was faithful to you. And when a girl lives by her looks, her gewgaws are her soul. Tell me where her gems are hidden."

With a pretence of pity, I said: "Yes, death has his hand upon me. Why should I persist in hating the woman?" Then, as if answering her inquiry, I whispered in her ear that she must do thus and so. And she, feigning enlightenment, said: "Long life to you! May the gods be gracious to you! May our lord, the Anga king, liberate you — he loves a man. And may these kind gentlemen be good to you." She hurried away, and I, by order of the police captain, was led to jail.

The next day I met Kantaka, the jailer. He was rather conceited, imagined himself handsome and a lady-killer, had recently inherited the job from his defunct father, and was somewhat young, flighty, and green. He gave me a bit of a lecture, then said: "If you refuse to return Dhanamitra's magic purse, or if you fail to restore your pickings and stealings to the citizens, you will see the eighteen tortures one after another, and end up by learning what death looks like."

"My dear sir," I answered with a smile, "suppose I should restore all

the money I have stolen since I was born, I could not fill the greedy maw of the magic wallet of my enemy Dhanamitra, that false friend who stole Arthapati's wife. Besides, I would endure ten thousand tortures sooner than give it up. You may regard this as final." In some such fashion proceeded our daily inquisition, half wheedling, half bullying, while with congenial food and drink my wounds were healing, so that in a few days I was quite my old self.

Now at a time when the day was dying in a blaze of sunlight yellow as Vishnu's robe, Shrigalika came with joyful face and flaming dress, waved the attendants aside, snuggled close, and said: "I congratulate you, sir. Your admirable plan bears fruit. As you bade me, I found Dhanamitra and said: 'Sir, your friend, having met such and such a misfortune, sends you this message: 'I am today in jail through the fault of drink (natural when one associates with courtezans); do not delay; this very day you must memorialize the king in these terms: 'Your Majesty, through Your Majesty's grace that magic purse, stolen by Arthapati, has been recovered. But I scraped an acquaintance with a certain gambling sharp, Ragmanjari's husband, because of his wonderful finesse in the polite arts, in poetical questions, and in social tittle-tattle. Knowing him, I humored his wife by sending her daily such trifles as dresses and jewels. Now that vulgar-minded gambler suspected me, and was angered to the point of stealing the magic wallet and his wife's jewel-casket. On his next thieving expedition he was caught by the police. Once in trouble, he obeyed the impulse of earlier affection for a nurse of Ragamanjari, who had followed him weeping, and revealed to her the spot where the jewels lay hidden. Now if he could be neatly inveigled into surrendering my magic wallet as well, then Your Gracious Majesty might pardon him.'

"'Thus approached, the king will not execute me, but will actually try coaxing to make me restore your property. This will work to our advantage.' Now Dhanamitra obeyed instructions exactly, and with no great apprehension, so confident was he of your competence.

"I, for my part, convinced Ragamanjari with the token from you, got from her all the money I wanted, and, in the way that you indicated, won over Mangalika, nurse of Princess Ambalika. Using her as a bridge, I promoted a tremendous friendship between Ragamanjari and Ambalika. And since I was the bearer of fresh presents every day, and was lavish with ravishing stories, I basked in the princess' favor.

"One day as she sat on the palace balcony, I made a pretence of fixing the lotus over her ear, as if it were falling (though it sat well enough); feigning to fumble, I knocked it off, then picked it up from the floor, and dropped it on Kantaka, who on some errand had entered the courtyard near the princess' chambers; and in the act I laughed aloud, pretending to scare some billing and cooing pigeons. So he thought he

had made a hit and glanced up with a smirk, while the princess laughed heartily at my carryings-on; then I went through a smart little pantomime, so that he might imagine her conduct flirtatious, with himself the object of her attention. The love-god tautened his bow and pierced the policeman with a venom-tipped, bewildering shaft; yet he contrived to stagger from the spot.

"In the evening I visited Kantaka's dwelling, with a little girl carrying a basket which, I said, came from Ragamanjari's house; it bore the seal of the princess' signet-ring and contained scented betel-gum, two silk garments, and an assortment of jewels. Sunk in passion's unplumbed sea, he regarded me as a rescue ship, and rejoiced exceedingly. And when I described the vicissitudes of the princess' sufferings, the simpleton turned quite maudlin. At his request, I brought him next day — saying that his love sent them — a sticky mass of gum (my own leavings), faded flowers, and soiled linen. And I took things from him for the princess, which I secretly threw away.

"When love's flame had thus been kindled, I took him aside and tutored him. 'Sir,' said I, 'the mystic marks on your person are not misleading. For a neighbor of mine, a fortune-teller, informs me: 'This kingdom will fall into Kantaka's hand. His mystic marks make that a certainty.' Naturally, then, this princess loves you. So the king, having no other issue, will indeed be angry when he learns that you have had dealings with her, yet fearing his daughter's death, will not only not destroy you, but will actually make you crown prince. Thus this business fits into predestined events. Why not serve fortune, my son? If you can devise no means of entering the princess' chambers, still the interval between prison wall and park palings measures only three fathoms. For that distance you can have a tunnel dug by some handy house-breaker. And when you enter the park, you will find sentinels in our service. For her servants are truly devoted, and will not split.'

"'A splendid scheme, dear lady,' said he. 'I happen to have a thief, a genuine son of Sagara for digging. If we take him, he will do this job in a jiffy.' 'Which one is he?' said I. 'And why not take him?' Whereupon he indicated you with the words: 'The fellow who stole that magic wallet of Dhanamitra.'

"'Well then,' I said, 'you must come to an agreement with him, swearing that, once this job is done, you will set him free with happy despatch. And when the work is over, you will fetter him once more, reporting to the king that this well-known thief is quite recovered, but so audacious and vindictive that he will not disclose the magic purse. Then you will give him his happy despatch — in a word, kill him. Thus your aim is gained, and the secret does not leak.' He agreed with delight and waits without, having delegated me to tempt you. You must plan the next step."

"You have left me little to say," I replied pleasantly. "Your plan covers the case. Bring him in." So the fellow was introduced and took an oath to set me free, while I swore not to betray the secret.

My fetters were removed, I enjoyed a bath, food, and ointment, then began at the corner of the prison wall where the darkness was dense, and dug a tunnel with a snake's-head spade. And I reflected: "The man took an oath to free me, while it was in his mind to kill me. Even if I kill him, I am no oath-breaker." As I emerged, he extended his hand to fetter me, but I felled him with a kick in the chest, and cut off his head with a knife. Then I said to Shrigalika: "Tell me, my dear, about the entrance to the women's apartments. I should not like this laborious job to prove unproductive. I will prig some little memento there before I leave."

At the spot which she indicated, I made my way into the maidens' quarters. There, in the blaze of jewelled lamps I beheld the princess securely sleeping among attendants who slumbered sound after their giddy games. She lay on a couch whose ivory feet were shaped to the likeness of recumbent lions, and set with splendid precious gems; its pillows were stuffed with swan's-down, and scattered flowers were strewn about its border. The instep of her left foot nestled beneath the right heel; the ankle showed a slight, sweet outward sweep; the calves lay close; the dainty knees were bent; the thighs had a graceful curve. One soft and shapely arm hung limp over the hip; the other comely arm was bent so that its open, flowerlike hand rested beside her cheek. Over the swell of the hips clung close the shift of Chinese silk. The lower body had a trim elegance; the generous breasts, like two budding blossoms, trembled in answer to each deep breath. On the charming flexure of the neck shone a necklace of rubies strung on a string of burnished gold; one earring lay snug, peeping from beneath a lovely ear half-hidden, while the jewelled ornament of the lovely ear which was wholly visible, darted pencils of light, gilding the ribbons in the loose-hanging hair that they informally fastened. The slight parting of two red lips was hardly noted by eyes intent on the innate beauty of each; one blossom-hand caressed and decked her cheek; shadowed in the mirror of her upper cheek, the bed's gay canopy rendered cosmetic service; the lotus-eyes were closed, becalmed the banner of the brows. Upon her forehead the beauty-spot of sandal paste was loosened by little invading pearls of weariness; like vines that stretch toward the moon, the locks of hair curled toward her face. Securely sleeping, in quiet recovery from gay and giddy play, one side half sinking in the dazzling whiteness of the coverlet, she seemed a lightning-flash lying in the lap of an autumn cloud.

At this vision the red fire of desire darted sparks; I was frightened; I lost all lust for stealing; nay, my own heart was stolen by her; I stood for a moment uncertain, but thinking hard: "If I do not win this sweet-eyed

maid, love will not let me live. Yet if I approach her without warning, she will surely scream and slay my hopes, for she is a mere girl. Then my life would be forfeit. So this must be my plan." I took from a bracket a tablet colored with a resinous paste, drew a brush from a jewel-box, and wrote the following quatrain, referring to her, lying thus asleep, and me, prostrate at her feet:

Your slave bows low to seek
This one petition meek:
Sleep not so like a bride —
I am not at your side.

From a golden basket I took a preparation of scented betel-leaves, a bit of camphor, and some coral-tree gum, chewing them to produce a liquor red as lac; so with the tip of my tongue I outlined on the plaster of the wall a pair of loving sheldrake birds. Then I effected an exchange of rings and tore myself away.

Returning through the tunnel into the prison, I found a fellow-prisoner, an estimable citizen named Simhaghosha, with whom I had fraternized in recent days. I told him how I had killed the wretched Kantaka, and how he could win liberty by turning informer. Then I departed with Shrigalika.

On the highway I fell in with a police patrol. And I thought: "I can escape by running. They would never touch me. But she would be caught, poor thing! So this is better.' I scuttled straight toward them, clapped my elbows to my back, wheeled around, and cried: "Gentlemen, gentlemen! If I am a thief, tie me up. That is your job, not this elderly female's."

From so slight a hint she divined my strategy, obsequiously drew near, and whimpered: "Dear gentlemen, this is my son. He has long been under treatment for lunatic seizures. Just yesterday he seemed pretty well, quite his true self indeed. So I made bold to take off his strait-jacket, gave him a bath, ointment, two spick-and-span garments, made him eat boiled rice and milk, and left him free on his bed last evening. But in the night he had another seizure, shouted out: 'I'm going to kill Kantaka and make love to the princess,' and started down the highway full gallop. When I saw my son in such a state, I followed, not minding the time of night. Please, please tie him up and give him back to me."

I turned on her with a shout: "You ancient female, who has ever tied the wind-god? How can these crows fetter the monarch of the birds? Heaven forbid!"

Then those fellows said to her: "You are a lunatic yourself. You think a lunatic is sane, and set him free. Who cares to tie him now?" And to the tune of this taunting and trimming, she chased after me, crying. I led the way to Ragamanjari's house, where I lavished redundant consolation on my bride drooping under the strain of long separation, and there I spent the rest of the night. At dawn I found Mister Noble.

Next I visited holy Marichi who, recuperating from his difficulty with the gay girl, had recovered divine insight at the heavy cost of renewed austerities, and who instructed me that my meeting with you, sir, would take place in the circumstances since realized. Meanwhile, Simhaghosha had disclosed Kantaka's dereliction, and had been appointed to the vacant office by the gratified king. He procured me — through the same tunnel from the prison — a second entrance to the chamber of the princess, who received me pleasantly, having learned the story from Shrigalika and taken a fondness to me.

In these same days Chandavarman, whose suit of Simhavarman's daughter had been repulsed, angrily clashed with him and besieged the capital. While he strove to close in, the Anga king, too impetuous to await allies, however near, himself breached the wall, issued forth and fought a superior enemy. In that great struggle Simhavarman's armor was pierced, and he was forcibly captured. Then Chandavarman roughly seized Ambalika, conveying her to his quarters for a forced marriage, and we heard that he was dressing for a wedding at daybreak.

Now I was in Dhanamitra's house, making certain festive preparations for that same wedding, and I said: "My friend, a group of kings allied with the Anga sovereign, is close at hand. Using the utmost secrecy, you and the city elders must direct them hither. When you arrive, you will see an enemy shorter by a head."

He assented. None noticed my knife as with the rest I entered the doomed scoundrel's quarters, noisy with holiday bustle, cluttered with wedding paraphernalia, packed by a press of people crowding in or squeezing out. He was just ready to grasp the blossom-hand of Ambalika which droning clergymen before the sacred fire were offering with Scriptural ritual, when I clutched his long, strong arm, and drove the knife to his heart. A few others also effervesced, and I sent them below.

As I stalked through the smitten, shaken quarters, I perceived the sweetly trembling form of the wide-eyed princess; I carried her into an inner chamber, longing for a blissful kiss. Just at that moment I was honored by hearing your voice, sir, deep as the roll of thunder from fresh-forming clouds.

Arabia

INTRODUCTION

IT IS principally because of the popularity of the so-called *Arabian Nights* that we are accustomed to associate the art of Oriental story-telling with Arabic literature. From the very earliest days the Arabs have, like all the Orientals, delighted in the telling of tales. Most of these are either embedded in the epics and prose romances, or else have been gathered together into a loose and somewhat conventional framework in such famous collections as the *Arabian Nights*.

Nothing has survived of the tales and legends of pre-Islamic times. It is not before the Tenth Century A.D. that we find writers practising the formal art of tale-telling, though naturally it was by that time an age-old custom of men who made a business of reciting. Al-Hamadhani (968–1054) wrote a series of short tales in his *Lectures*, and to him, says Huart in his *History of Arabic Literature*, "belongs the credit of having been the first to create a new form of literature, by making a volume of short stories of the comic adventures of beggars and rogues." About a century later Hariri also wrote a book of *Lectures* in which he brought to perfection the type of story which Al-Hamadhani had first written down.

It is hardly necessary to dwell on the development of the historical anecdote as written by Mas'udi, Abu Bakr Muhammed, Abu Abdallah, and others; these men were writing stories, in one form or another, for the entertainment and instruction of their contemporaries. During the two or three centuries after the time of these writers, there appeared several collections of tales, for the most part based upon foreign works, or Arabic originals already written down by native authors.

Though the materials of the romances and epics like *The Romance of Antar* were known in the earliest times, it was not until the period of the Crusades that that magnificent work was composed. Al-Asmai is the reputed author, though it is generally believed that this may be only a "label placed by the professional *rawi* on the stories."

Several other romances, modelled more or less closely on *Antar*, are now extant.

Of *The Thousand and One Nights*, better known to us as *The Arabian Nights*, many volumes have been written. This monumental work was

composed some time between the Tenth and the Fourteenth Century, A.D., by an unknown author. Within a purely conventional framework, many stories are related, several quite short, but many of them sufficiently developed to warrant our regarding them as short novels. The collection is based upon a Persian original, which in its turn was to a certain extent based on an ancient Indian text. There are certain stories, like *Sinbad*, the "origin of which goes back to the palmy days of trade in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean."

SINBAD THE SAILOR

(Anonymous: 10th–14th Century, A.D.)

This is one of the most celebrated tales in the whole collection of *The Arabian Nights*. In its form it resembles a certain type of fiction known in most literatures, which is based on "travellers' lies"; yet it is evident that there is more than a modicum of truth and some true observation underlying the highly imaginative passages that abound throughout the several chapters of Voyages. It is of later composition than many of the stories in the collection: in the opinion of Lane, it was probably modelled after two works, one dating from the Thirteenth and the other from the Fourteenth Century.

The present translation is by Edward William Lane, first published in London in 1839, and revised several times since that date. It includes all the "nights" from the 537th to the 566th. The full title in Lane's version is *The Story of Es-Sindibad of the Sea and Es-Sindibad of the Land*. The name "Es-Sindibad" has been changed throughout to the more convenient and familiar "Sinbad."

THE VOYAGES OF SINBAD

THERE was, in the time of the Khaleefeh, the Prince of the Faithful, Hároon Er-Rasheed, in the city of Baghdád, a man called Sinbad, the Porter. He was a man in poor circumstances, who bore burdens for hire upon his head. And it happened to him that he bore one day a heavy burden, and that day was excessively hot; so he was wearied by the load, and perspired profusely, the heat violently oppressing him. In this state he passed by the door of a merchant, the ground before which was swept and sprinkled, and there the air was temperate; and by the side of the door was a wide mastabah. The porter therefore put down his burden upon that mastabah, to rest himself, and to scent the air; and when he had done so, there came forth upon him from the door, a pleasant, gentle gale, and an exquisite odour, wherewith the porter was delighted. He seated himself upon the edge of the mastabah, and heard in that place the melodious sounds of stringed instruments, with the lute among them, and mirth-exciting voices, and varieties of distinct recitations. He heard also the voices of birds, warbling, and praising God (whose name be exalted!) with diverse tones and with all dialects; consisting of turtle-doves and hezárs and blackbirds and nightingales and ring-doves and keerawáns; whereupon he wondered in his mind, and was moved with great delight.

He then advanced to that door, and found within the house a great garden, wherein he beheld pages and slaves and servants and other dependants, and such things as existed not elsewhere save in the abodes of Kings and Sultáns; and after that, there blew upon him the odour of delicious, exquisite viands, of all different kinds, and of delicious wine.

Upon this he raised his eyes towards heaven, and said, Extolled be thy perfection, O Lord! O Creator! O Supplier of the conveniences of life! Thou suppliest whom thou wilt without reckoning! O Allah, I implore thy forgiveness of all offences, and turn to Thee repenting of all faults! O Lord, there is no animadverting upon Thee with respect to thy judgment and thy power; for Thou art not to be questioned regarding that which Thou doest, and Thou art able to do whatsoever Thou wilt! Extolled be Thy perfection! Thou enrichest whom Thou wilt, and whom Thou wilt Thou impoverishest! Thou magnifiest whom Thou wilt, and whom Thou wilt Thou abasest! There is no deity but Thou! How great is thy dignity! and how mighty is thy dominion! and how excellent is thy government! Thou hast bestowed favours upon him whom Thou choosest among thy servants, and the owner of this place is in the utmost affluence, delighting himself with pleasant odours and delicious meats and exquisite beverages of all descriptions. And Thou hast appointed unto thy creatures what Thou wilt, and what Thou hast predestined for them; so that among them one is weary, and another is at ease; and one of them is prosperous, and another is like me, in the extreme of fatigue and abjection! — And he recited thus: —

How many wretched persons are destitute of ease! and how many are in luxury, reposing in the shade!
I find myself afflicted by trouble beyond measure; and strange is my condition, and heavy is my load!
Others are in prosperity, and from wretchedness are free, and never for a single day have borne a load like mine;
Incessantly and amply blest, throughout the course of life, with happiness and grandeur, as well as drink and meat.
All men whom God hath made are in origin alike; and I resemble this man, and he resembleth me;
But otherwise, between us is a difference as great as the difference that we find between wine and vinegar.
Yet in saying this, I utter no falsehood against Thee, [O my Lord;] for thou art wise, and with justice Thou hast judged.

And when Sinbad the Porter had finished the recitation of his verses, he desired to take up his burden and to depart. But, lo, there came forth to him from that door a young page, handsome in countenance, comely in stature, magnificent in apparel; and he laid hold upon the porter's hand, saying to him, Enter: answer the summons of my master; for he calleth for thee. And the porter would have refused to enter with the page; but he could not. He therefore deposited his burden with the doorkeeper in the entrance-passage, and, entering the house with the page, he

found it to be a handsome mansion, presenting an appearance of joy and majesty. And he looked towards a grand chamber, in which he beheld noblemen and great lords; and in it were all kinds of flowers, and all kinds of sweet scents, and varieties of dried and fresh fruits, together with abundance of various kinds of exquisite viands, and beverage prepared from the fruit of the choicest grape-vines. In it were also instruments of music and mirth, and varieties of beautiful slave-girls, all ranged in proper order. And at the upper end of that chamber was a great and venerable man, in the sides of whose beard grey hairs had begun to appear. He was of handsome form, comely in countenance, with an aspect of gravity and dignity and majesty and stateliness. So, upon this Sinbad the Porter was confounded, and he said within himself, By Allah, this place is a portion of Paradise, or it is the palace of a King or Sultán! Then, putting himself in a respectful posture, he saluted the assembly, prayed for them, and kissed the ground before them; after which he stood, hanging down his head in humility. But the master of the house gave him permission to seat himself. He therefore sat. And the master of the house had caused him to draw near unto him, and now began to cheer him with conversation, and to welcome him; and he put before him some of the various excellent, delicious, exquisite viands. So Sinbad the Porter advanced, and, having said, In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful, — ate until he was satisfied and satiated, when he said, Praise be to God in every case! — and washed his hands, and thanked them for this.

The master of the house then said, Thou art welcome, and thy day is blessed. What is thy name, and what trade dost thou follow? — O my master, he answered, my name is Sinbad the Porter, and I bear upon my head men's merchandise for hire. And at his, the master of the house smiled, and he said to him, Know, O porter, that thy name is like mine; for I am Sinbad of the Sea; but, O porter, I desire that thou let me hear the verses that thou wast reciting when thou wast at the door. The porter therefore was ashamed, and said to him, I conjure thee by Allah that thou be not angry with me; for fatigue and trouble, and paucity of what the hand possesseth, teach a man ill manners, and impertinence. His host, however, replied, Be not ashamed; for thou hast become my brother: recite then the verses, since they pleased me when I heard them from thee as thou recitedst them at the door. So upon this the porter recited to him those verses, and they pleased him, and he was moved with delight on hearing them. He then said to him, O porter, know that my story is wonderful, and I will inform thee of all that happened to me and befell me before I obtained this prosperity and sat in this place wherein thou seest me. For I attained not this prosperity and this place save after severe fatigue and great trouble and many terrors. How often have I endured fatigue and toil in my early years! I have performed seven voyages, and connected with each voyage is a wonderful tale, that

would confound the mind. All that which I endured happened by fate and destiny, and from that which is written there is no escape nor flight.

The First Voyage of Sinbad of the Sea

Know, O masters, O noble persons, that I had a father, a merchant, who was one of the first in rank among the people and the merchants, and who possessed abundant wealth and ample fortune. He died when I was a young child, leaving to me wealth and buildings and fields; and when I grew up, I put my hand upon the whole of the property, ate well and drank well, associated with the young men, wore handsome apparel, and passed my life with my friends and companions, feeling confident that this course would continue and profit me; and I ceased not to live in this manner for a length of time. I then returned to my reason, and recovered from my heedlessness, and found that my wealth had passed away, and my condition had changed, and all [the money] that I had possessed had gone. I recovered not to see my situation but in a state of fear and confusion of mind, and remembered a tale that I had heard before, the tale of our lord Suleymán the son of Dáood (on both of whom be peace!), respecting his saying, Three things are better than three: the day of death is better than the day of birth; and a living dog is better than a dead lion; and the grave is better than the palace. Then I arose, and collected what I had, of effects and apparel, and sold them; after which I sold my buildings and all that my hand possessed, and amassed three thousand pieces of silver; and it occurred to my mind to travel to the countries of other people; and I remembered one of the sayings of the poets, which was this: —

In proportion to one's labour, eminences are gained; and he who seeketh eminence passeth sleepless nights.

He diveth in the sea who seeketh for pearls, and succeedeth in acquiring lordship and good fortune.

Whoso seeketh eminence without labouring for it, loseth his life in the search of vanity.

Upon this I resolved, and arose, and bought for myself goods and commodities and merchandise, with such other things as were required for travel; and my mind had consented to my performing a sea-voyage. So I embarked in a ship, and it descended to the city of El-Basrah, with a company of merchants; and we traversed the sea for many days and nights. We had passed by island after island, and from sea to sea, and from land to land; and in every place by which we passed we sold and bought, and exchanged merchandise. We continued our voyage until we arrived at an island like one of the gardens of Paradise, and at that island the master of the ship brought her to anchor with us. He cast the anchor, and put forth the landing-plank, and all who were in the ship landed upon that island. They had prepared for themselves fire-pots, and they lighted the fires in them; and their occupations were various: some cooked; others

washed; and others amused themselves. I was among those who were amusing themselves upon the shores of the island, and the passengers were assembled to eat and drink and play and sport. But while we were thus engaged, lo, the master of the ship, standing upon its side, called out with his loudest voice, O ye passengers, whom may God preserve! come up quickly into the ship, hasten to embark, and leave your merchandise, and flee with your lives, and save yourselves from destruction; for this apparent island, upon which ye are, is not really an island, but it is a great fish that hath become stationary in the midst of the sea, and the sand hath accumulated upon it, so that it hath become like an island, and trees have grown upon it since times of old; and when ye lighted upon it the fire, it felt the heat, and put itself in motion, and now it will descend with you into the sea, and ye will all be drowned: then seek for yourselves escape before destruction, and leave the merchandise! — The passengers, therefore, hearing the words of the master of the ship, hastened to go up into the vessel, leaving the merchandise, and their other goods, and their copper cooking-pots, and their fire-pots; and some reached the ship, and others reached it not. The island had moved, and descended to the bottom of the sea, with all that were upon it, and the roaring sea, agitated with waves, closed over it.

I was among the number of those who remained behind upon the island; so I sank in the sea with the rest who sank. But God (whose name be exalted!) delivered me and saved me from drowning, and supplied me with a great wooden bowl, of the bowls in which the passengers had been washing, and I laid hold upon it and got into it, induced by the sweetness of life, and beat the water with my feet as with oars, while the waves sported with me, tossing me to the right and left. The master of the vessel had caused her sails to be spread, and pursued his voyage with those who had embarked, not regarding such as had been submerged; and I ceased not to look at that vessel until it was concealed from my eye. I made sure of destruction, and night came upon me while I was in this state; but I remained so a day and a night, and the wind and the waves aided me until the bowl came to a stoppage with me under a high island, whereon were trees overhanging the sea. So I laid hold upon a branch of a lofty tree, and clung to it, after I had been at the point of destruction; and I kept hold upon it until I landed on the island, when I found my legs benumbed, and saw marks of the nibbling of fish upon their hams, of which I had been insensible by reason of the violence of the anguish and fatigue that I was suffering.

I threw myself upon the island like one dead, and was unconscious of my existence, and drowned in my stupefaction; and I ceased not to remain in this condition until the next day. The sun having then risen upon me, I awoke upon the island, and found that my feet were swollen, and that I had become reduced to the state in which I then was. Awhile I dragged

myself along in a sitting posture, and then I crawled upon my knees. And there were in the island fruits in abundance, and springs of sweet water: therefore I ate of those fruits; and I ceased not to continue in this state for many days and nights. My spirit had then revived, my soul had returned to me, and my power of motion was renewed; and I began to meditate, and to walk along the shore of the island, amusing myself among the trees with the sight of the things that God (whose name be exalted!) had created; and I had made for myself a staff from those trees, to lean upon it. Thus I remained until I walked, one day, upon the shore of the island, and there appeared unto me an indistinct object in the distance. I imagined that it was a wild beast, or one of the beasts of the sea; and I walked towards it, ceasing not to gaze at it; and, lo, it was a mare, of superb appearance, tethered in a part of the island by the sea-shore. I approached her; but she cried out against me with a great cry, and I trembled with fear of her, and was about to return, when, behold, a man came forth from beneath the earth, and he called to me and pursued me, saying to me, Who art thou, and whence hast thou come, and what is the cause of thine arrival in this place? So I answered him, O my master, know that I am a stranger, and I was in a ship, and was submerged in the sea with certain others of the passengers; but God supplied me with a wooden bowl, and I got into it, and it bore me along until the waves cast me upon this island. And when he heard my words, he laid hold of my hand and said to me, Come with me. I therefore went with him, and he descended with me into a grotto beneath the earth, and conducted me into a large subterranean chamber, and having seated me at the upper end of that chamber, brought me some food. I was hungry; so I ate until I was satiated and contented, and my soul became at ease. Then he asked me respecting my case, and what had happened to me; wherefore I acquainted him with my whole affair from beginning to end; and he wondered at my story.

And when I had finished my tale, I said, I conjure thee by Allah, O my master, that thou be not displeased with me: I have acquainted thee with the truth of my case and of what hath happened to me, and I desire of thee that thou inform me who thou art, and what is the cause of thy dwelling in this chamber that is beneath the earth, and what is the reason of thy tethering this mare by the sea-side. So he replied, Know that we are a party dispersed in this island, upon its shores, and we are the grooms of the King El-Mihráj, having under our care all his horses; and every month, when moonlight commenceth, we bring the swift mares, and tether them in this island, every mare that has not foaled, and conceal ourselves in this chamber beneath the earth, that they may attract the sea-horses. This is the time of the coming forth of the sea-horse; and afterwards, if it be the will of God (whose name be exalted!), I will take thee with me to the King El-Mihráj, and divert thee with the sight of our country. Know,

moreover, that if thou hadst not met with us, thou hadst not seen any one in this place, and wouldst have died in misery, none knowing of thee. But I will be the means of the preservation of thy life, and of thy return to thy country. — I therefore prayed for him, and thanked him for his kindness and beneficence; and while we were thus talking, the horse came forth from the sea, as he had said. And shortly after, his companions came, each leading a mare; and, seeing me with him, they inquired of me my story, and I told them what I had related to him. They then drew near to me, and spread the table, and ate, and invited me: so I ate with them; after which, they arose, and mounted the horses, taking me with them, having mounted me on a mare.

We commenced our journey, and proceeded without ceasing until we arrived at the city of the King El-Mihráj, and they went in to him and acquainted him with my story. He therefore desired my presence, and they took me in to him, and stationed me before him; whereupon I saluted him, and he returned my salutation, and welcomed me, greeting me in an honourable manner, and inquired of me respecting my case. So I informed him of all that had happened to me, and of all that I had seen from the beginning to end; and he wondered at that which had befallen me and happened to me, and said to me, O my son, by Allah thou hast experienced an extraordinary preservation, and had it not been for the predestined length of thy life, thou hadst not escaped from these difficulties; but praise be to God for thy safety! Then he treated me with beneficence and honour, caused me to draw near to him, and began to cheer me with conversation and courtesy; and he made me his superintendent of the sea-port, and registrar of every vessel that came to the coast. I stood in his presence to transact his affairs, and he favoured me and benefited me in every respect; he invested me with a handsome and costly dress, and I became a person high in credit with him in intercessions, and in accomplishing the affairs of the people. I ceased not to remain in his service for a long time; and whenever I went to the shore of the sea, I used to inquire of the merchants and travellers and sailors respecting the direction of the city of Baghdád, that perchance some one might inform me of it, and I might go with him thither and return to my country; but none knew it, nor knew any one who went to it. At this I was perplexed, and I was weary of the length of my absence from home; and in this state I continued for a length of time, until I went in one day to the King El-Mihráj, and found with him a party of Indians. I saluted them, and they returned my salutation, and welcomed me, and asked me respecting my country; after which, I questioned them as to their country, and they told me that they consisted of various races. Among them are the Shákireeyeh, who are the most noble of their races, who oppress no one, nor offer violence to any. And among them are a class called the Bráhmans, a people who never drink wine; but they are persons

of pleasure and joy and sport and merriment, and possessed of camels and horses and cattle. They informed me also that the Indians are divided into seventy-two classes; and I wondered at this extremely. And I saw, in the dominions of the King El-Mihráj, an island, among others, which is called Kásil, in which is heard the beating of tambourines and drums throughout the night, and the islanders and travellers informed us that Ed-Dejjál is in it. I saw too, in the sea in which is that island, a fish two hundred cubits long, and the fishermen fear it; wherefore they knock some pieces of wood, and it fleeth from them: and I saw a fish whose face was like that of the owl. I likewise saw during that voyage many wonderful and strange things, such that, if I related them to you, the description would be too long.

I continued to amuse myself with the sight of those islands and the things that they contained, until I stood one day upon the shore of the sea, with a staff in my hand, as was my custom, and, lo, a great vessel approached, wherein were many merchants; and when it arrived at the harbour of the city, and its place of anchoring, the master furled its sails, brought it to an anchor by the shore, and put forth the landing-plank; and the sailors brought out every thing that was in that vessel to the shore. They were slow in taking forth the goods, while I stood writing their account, and I said to the master of the ship, Doth aught remain in thy vessel? He answered, Yes, O my master; I have some goods in the hold of the ship; but their owner was drowned in the sea at one of the islands during our voyage hither, and his goods are in our charge; so we desire to sell them, and to take a note of their price, in order to convey it to his family in the city of Baghdád, the Abode of Peace. I therefore said to the master, What was the name of that man, the owner of the goods? He answered, His name was Sinbad of the Sea, and he was drowned on his voyage with us in the sea. And when I heard his words, I looked at him with a scrutinizing eye, and recognised him; and I cried out at him with a great cry, and said, O master, know that I am the owner of the goods which thou hast mentioned, and I am Sinbad of the Sea, who descended upon the island from the ship, with the other merchants who descended; and when the fish that we were upon moved, and thou calledst out to us, some got up into the vessel, and the rest sank, and I was among those who sank. But God (whose name be exalted!) preserved me and saved me from drowning by means of a large wooden bowl, of those in which the passengers were washing, and I got into it, and began to beat the water with my feet, and the wind and the waves aided me until I arrived at this island, when I landed on it, and God (whose name be exalted!) assisted me, and I met the grooms of the King El-Mihráj, who took me with them and brought me to this city. They then led me in to the King El-Mihráj, and I acquainted him with my story; whereupon he bestowed benefits upon me, and appointed me

clerk of the harbour of this city, and I obtained profit in his service, and favour with him. Therefore these goods that thou hast are my goods and my portion.

But the master said, There is no strength nor power but in God the High, the Great! There is no longer faith nor conscience in any one! — Wherefore, O master, said I, when thou hast heard me tell thee my story? He answered, Because thou heardest me say that I had goods whose owner was drowned: therefore thou desirest to take them without price; and this is unlawful to thee; for we saw him when he sank, and there were with him many of the passengers, not one of whom escaped. How then dost thou pretend that thou art the owner of the goods? So I said to him, O master, hear my story, and understand my words, and my veracity will become manifest to thee; for falsehood is a characteristic of the hypocrites. Then I related to him all that I had done from the time that I went forth with him from the city of Baghdád until we arrived at that island upon which we were submerged in the sea, and I mentioned to him some circumstances that had occurred between me and him. Upon this, therefore, the master and the merchants were convinced of my veracity, and recognised me; and they congratulated me on my safety, all of them saying, By Allah, we believed not that thou hadst escaped drowning; but God hath granted thee a new life. They then gave me the goods and I found my name written upon them, and nought of them was missing. So I opened them, and took forth from them something precious and costly; the sailors of the ship carried it with me, and I went up with it to the King to offer it as a present, and informed him that this ship was the one on which I was a passenger. I told him also that my goods had arrived all entire, and that this present was a part of them. And the King wondered at this affair extremely; my veracity in all that I had said became manifest to him, and he loved me greatly, and treated me with exceeding honour, giving me a large present in return for mine.

Then I sold my bales, as well as the other goods that I had, and gained upon them abundantly; and I purchased other goods and merchandise and commodities of that city. And when the merchants of the ship desired to set forth on their voyage, I stowed all that I had in the vessel, and, going in to the King, thanked him for his beneficence and kindness; after which I begged him to grant me permission to depart on my voyage to my country and my family. So he bade me farewell, and gave me an abundance of things at my departure, of the commodities of that city; and when I had taken leave of him, I embarked in the ship, and we set sail by the permission of God, whose name be exalted! Fortune served us, and destiny aided us, and we ceased not to prosecute our voyage night and day until we arrived in safety at the city of El-Basrah. There we landed, and remained a short time; and I rejoiced at my safety, and my return to my country; and after that, I repaired to the city of

Baghdád, the Abode of Peace, with abundance of bales and goods and merchandise of great value. Then I went to my quarter, and entered my house, and all my family and companions came to me. I procured for myself servants and other dependants, and memlooks and concubines and male black slaves, so that I had a large establishment; and I purchased houses and other immoveable possessions, more than I had at first. I enjoyed the society of my companions and friends, exceeding my former habits, and forgot all that I had suffered from fatigue, and absence from my native country, and difficulty, and the terrors of travel. I occupied myself with delights and pleasures, and delicious meats and exquisite drinks, and continued in this state. Such were the events of the first of my voyages; and to-morrow, if it be the will of God (whose name be exalted!), I will relate to you the tale of the second of the seven voyages.

Sinbad of the Sea then made Sinbad of the Land to sup with him; after which he gave orders to present him with a hundred pieces of gold, and said to him, Thou hast cheered us by thy company this day. So the porter thanked him, and took from him what he had given him, and went his way, meditating upon the events that befell and happened to mankind, and wondering extremely. He slept that night in his abode; and when the morning came, he repaired to the house of Sinbad of the Sea, and went in to him; and he welcomed him, and treated him with honour, seating him by him. And after the rest of his companions had come, the food and drink were set before them, and the time was pleasant to them, and they were merry. Then Sinbad of the Sea began his narrative thus:—

The Second Voyage of Sinbad of the Sea

Know, O my brothers, that I was enjoying a most comfortable life, and the most pure happiness, as ye were told yesterday, until it occurred to my mind, one day, to travel again to the lands of other people, and I felt a longing for the occupation of traffic, and the pleasure of seeing the countries and islands of the world, and gaining my subsistence. I resolved upon that affair, and, having taken forth from my money a large sum, I purchased with it goods and merchandise suitable for travel, and packed them up. Then I went to the bank of the river, and found a handsome, new vessel, with sails of comely canvas, and it had a numerous crew, and was superfluously equipped. So I embarked my bales in it, as did also a party of merchants besides, and we set sail that day. The voyage was pleasant to us, and we ceased not to pass from sea to sea, and from island to island; and at every place where we cast anchor, we met the merchants and the grandees, and the sellers and buyers, and we sold and bought, and exchanged goods. Thus we continued to do until destiny conveyed us to a beautiful island, abounding with trees bearing ripe fruits, where flowers diffused thier fragrance, with birds warbling, and pure rivers: but

there was not in it an inhabitant, nor a blower of a fire. The master anchored our vessel at that island, and the merchants with the other passengers landed there, to amuse themselves with the sight of its trees, and to extol the perfection of God, the One, the Omnipotent, and to wonder at the Almighty King. I also landed upon the island with the rest, and sat by a spring of pure water among the trees. I had with me some food, and I sat in that place eating what God (whose name be exalted!) had allotted me. The zephyr was sweet to us in that place, and the time was pleasant to me; so slumber overcame me, and I reposed there, and became immersed in sleep, enjoying that sweet zephyr, and the fragrant gales. I then arose, and found not in the place a human being nor a Jinnee. The vessel had gone with the passengers, and not one of them remembered me, neither any of the merchants nor any of the sailors: so they left me in the island.

I looked about it to the right and left, and found not in it any one save myself. I was therefore affected with violent vexation, not to be exceeded, and my gall-bladder almost burst by reason of the severity of my grief and mourning and fatigue. I had not with me aught of worldly goods, neither food nor drink, and I had become desolate, weary in my soul, and despairing of life; and I said, Not every time doth the jar escape unbroken; and if I escaped the first time, and found him who took me with him from the shore of the island to the inhabited part, far, far from me this time is the prospect of my finding him who will convey me to inhabited lands! Then I began to weep and wail for myself until vexation overpowered me; and I blamed myself for that which I had done, and for my having undertaken this voyage and fatigue after I had been reposing at ease in my abode and my country, in ample happiness, and enjoying good food and good drink and good apparel, and had not been in want of any thing, either of money or goods or merchandise. I repented of my having gone forth from the city of Baghdád, and set out on a voyage over the sea, after the fatigue that I had suffered during my first voyage, and I felt at the point of destruction, and said, Verily to God we belong, and verily unto Him we return! And I was in the predicament of the mad. After that, I rose and stood up, and walked about the island to the right and left, unable to sit in one place. Then I climbed up a lofty tree; and began to look from it to the right and left; but saw nought save sky and water, and trees and birds, and islands and sands. Looking, however, with a scrutinizing eye, there appeared to me on the island a white object, indistinctly seen in the distance, of enormous size: so I descended from the tree, and went towards it, and proceeded in that direction without stopping until I arrived at it; and, lo, it was a huge white dome, of great height and large circumference. I drew near to it, and walked round it; but perceived no door to it; and I found that I had not strength nor activity to climb it, on account of its exceeding smoothness. I made a mark

at the place where I stood, and went round the dome measuring its circumference; and, lo, it was fifty full paces; and I meditated upon some means of gaining an entrance into it.

The close of the day, and the setting of the sun, had now drawn near; and, behold, the sun was hidden, and the sky became dark, and the sun was veiled from me. I therefore imagined that a cloud had come over it; but this was in the season of summer: so I wondered; and I raised my head, and, contemplating that object attentively, I saw that it was a bird, of enormous size, bulky body, and wide wings, flying in the air; and this it was that concealed the body of the sun, and veiled it from view upon the island. At this my wonder increased, and I remembered a story which travellers and voyagers had told me long before, that there is, in certain of the islands, a bird of enormous size, called the rukh′, that feedeth its young ones with elephants. I was convinced, therefore, that the dome which I had seen was one of the eggs of the rukh′. I wondered at the works of God (whose name be exalted!); and while I was in this state, lo, that bird alighted upon the dome, and brooded over it with its wings, stretching out its legs behind upon the ground; and it slept over it. — Extolled be the perfection of Him who sleepeth not! — Thereupon I arose, and unwound my turban from my head, and folded it and twisted it so that it became like a rope; and I girded myself with it, binding it tightly round my waist, and tied myself by it to one of the feet of that bird, and made the knot fast, saying within myself, Perhaps this bird will convey me to a land of cities and inhabitants, and that will be better than my remaining in this island. I passed the night sleepless, fearing that, if I slept, the bird would fly away with me when I was not aware; and when the dawn came, and morn appeared, the bird rose from its egg, and uttered a great cry, and drew me up into the sky. It ascended and soared up so high that I imagined it had reached the highest region of the sky; and after that, it descended with me gradually until it alighted with me upon the earth, and rested upon a lofty spot. So when I reached the earth, I hastily untied the bond from its foot, fearing it, though it knew not of me nor was sensible of me; and after I had loosed my turban from it, and disengaged it from its foot, shaking as I did so, I walked away. Then it took something from the face of the earth in its talons, and soared to the upper region of the sky; and I looked attentively at that thing, and, lo, it was a serpent, of enormous size, of great body, which it had taken and carried off towards the sea; and I wondered at that event.

After this, I walked about that place, and found myself upon an eminence, beneath which was a large, wide, deep valley; and by its side, a great mountain, very high; no one could see its summit by reason of its excessive height, and no one had power to ascend it. I therefore blamed myself for that which I had done, and said, Would that I had remained in the island, since it is better than this desert place; for in the island are

found, among various fruits, what I might have eaten, and I might have drunk of its rivers; but in this place are neither trees nor fruits nor rivers: and there is no strength nor power but in God, the High, the Great! Verily every time that I escape from a calamity, I fall into another that is greater and more severe! — Then I arose, and emboldened myself, and walked in that valley; and I beheld its ground to be composed of diamonds, with which they perforate minerals and jewels, and with which also they perforate porcelain and the onyx; and it is a stone so hard that neither iron nor rock have any effect upon it, nor can any one cut aught off from it, or break it, unless by means of the lead-stone. All that valley was likewise occupied by serpents and venomous snakes, every one of them like a palm-tree; and by reason of its enormous size, if an elephant came to it, it would swallow it. Those serpents appeared in the night, and hid themselves in the day, fearing lest the rukh′ and the vulture should carry them off, and after that tear them in pieces; and the cause of that I know not. I remained in that valley, repenting of what I had done, and said within myself, By Allah, I have hastened my own destruction! The day departed from me, and I began to walk along that valley, looking for a place in which to pass the night, fearing those serpents, and forgetting my food and drink and subsistence, occupied only by care for my life. And there appeared to me a cave near by; so I walked thither, and I found its entrance narrow. I therefore entered it, and seeing a large stone by its mouth, I pushed it, and stopped with it the mouth of the cave while I was within it; and I said within myself, I am safe now that I have entered this place; and when daylight shineth upon me, I will go forth, and see what destiny will do. Then I looked within the cave, and beheld a huge serpent sleeping at the upper end of it over its eggs. At this my flesh quaked, and I raised my head, and committed my case to fate and destiny; and I passed all the night sleepless, until the dawn rose and shone, when I removed the stone with which I had closed the entrance of the cave, and went forth from it, like one intoxicated, giddy from excessive sleeplessness and hunger and fear.

I then walked along the valley; and while I was thus occupied, lo, a great slaughtered animal fell before me, and I found no one. So I wondered thereat extremely; and I remembered a story that I had heard long before from certain of the merchants and travellers, and persons in the habit of journeying about, — that in the mountains of the diamonds are experienced great terrors, and that no one can gain access to the diamonds, but that the merchants who import them know a stratagem by means of which to obtain them: that they take a sheep, and slaughter it, and skin it, and cut up its flesh, which they throw down from the mountain, to the bottom of the valley: so, descending fresh and moist, some of these stones stick to it. Then the merchants leave it until midday, and birds of the large kind of vulture and the aquiline vulture descend to that

meat, and, taking it in their talons, fly up to the top of the mountain; whereupon the merchants come to them, and cry out at them, and they fly away from the meat. The merchants then advance to that meat, and take from it the stones sticking to it; after which they leave the meat for the birds and the wild beasts, and carry the stones to their countries. And no one can procure the diamonds but by means of this stratagem. — Therefore when I beheld that slaughtered animal, and remembered this story, I arose and went to the slaughtered beast. I then selected a great number of these stones, and put them into my pocket, and within my clothes; and I proceeded to select, and to put into my pockets and my girdle and my turban, and within my clothes. And while I was doing thus, lo, another great slaughtered animal. So I bound myself to it with my turban, and, laying myself down on my back, placed it upon my bosom, and grasped it firmly. Thus it was raised high above the ground; and, behold, a vulture descended upon it, seized it with its talons, and flew up with it into the air, with me attached to it: and it ceased not to soar up until it had ascended with it to the summit of the mountain, when it alighted with it, and was about to tear off some of it. And thereupon a great and loud cry arose from behind that vulture, and something made a clattering with a piece of wood upon the mountain; whereat the vulture flew away in fear, and soared into the sky.

I therefore disengaged myself from the slaughtered animal, with the blood of which my clothes were polluted; and I stood by its side. And, lo, the merchant who had cried out at the vulture advanced to the slaughtered animal, and saw me standing there. He spoke not to me; for he was frightened at me, and terrified; but he came to the slaughtered beast, and turned it over; and not finding anything upon it, he uttered a loud cry, and said, Oh, my disappointment! There is no strength nor power but in God! We seek refuge with God from Satan the accursed! — He repented, and struck hand upon hand, and said, Oh, my grief! What is this affair? — So I advanced to him, and he said to me, Who art thou, and what is the reason of thy coming to this place? I answered him, Fear not, nor be alarmed; for I am a human being, of the best of mankind; and I was a merchant, and my tale is marvellous, and my story extraordinary, and the cause of my coming to this mountain and this valley is wondrous to relate. Fear not; for thou shalt receive of me what will rejoice thee; I have with me abundance of diamonds, of which I will give thee as much as will suffice thee, and every piece that I have is better than all that would come to thee by other means: therefore be not timorous nor afraid. — And upon this the man thanked me, and prayed for me, and conversed with me; and, lo, the other merchants heard me talking with their companion; so they came to me. Each merchant had thrown down a slaughtered animal; and when they came to us, they saluted me, and congratulated me on my safety, and took me with them; and I acquainted

them with my whole story, relating to them what I had suffered on my voyage, and telling them the cause of my arrival in this valley. Then I gave to the owner of the slaughtered animal to which I had attached myself an abundance of what I had brought with me; and he was delighted with me, and prayed for me, and thanked me for that; and the other merchants said to me, By Allah, a new life hath been decreed thee; for no one ever arrived at this place before thee and escaped from it; but praise be to God for thy safety! They passed the next night in a pleasant and safe place, and I passed the night with them full of the utmost joy at my safety and my escape from the valley of serpents, and my arrival in an inhabited country.

And when day came, we arose and journeyed over that great mountain beholding in that valley numerous serpents; and we continued to advance until we arrived at a garden in a great and beautiful island, wherein were camphor-trees, under each of which trees a hundred men might shade themselves. When any one desireth to obtain some camphor from one of these trees, he maketh a perforation in the upper part of it with something long, and catcheth what descended from it. The liquid camphor floweth from it, and concreteth like gum. It is the juice of that tree; and after this operation, the tree drieth, and becometh firewood. In that island too is a kind of wild beast called the rhinoceros, which pastureth there like oxen and buffaloes in our country; but the bulk of that wild beast is greater than the bulk of the camel, and it eateth the tender leaves of trees. It is a huge beast, with a single horn, thick, in the middle of its head, a cubit in length, wherein is the figure of a man. And in that island are some animals of the ox-kind. Moreover, the sailors and travellers, and persons in the habit of journeying about in the mountains and the lands, have told us, that this wild beast which is named the rhinoceros lifteth the great elephant upon its horn, and pastureth with it upon the island and the shores, without being sensible of it; and the elephant dieth upon its horn; and its fat, melting by the heat of the sun, and flowing upon its head, entereth its eyes, so that it becometh blind. Then it lieth down upon the shore, and the rukh′ cometh to it, and carrieth it off [with the elephant] in its talons to its young ones, and feedeth them with it and with that which is upon its horn, [namely the elephant]. I saw also in that island abundance of the buffalo-kind, the like of which existeth not among us.

The valley before mentioned containeth a great quantity of diamonds such as I carried off and hid in my pockets. For these the people gave me in exchange goods and commodities belonging to them; and they conveyed them for me, giving me likewise pieces of silver and pieces of gold; and I ceased not to proceed with them, amusing myself with the sight of different countries, and of what God hath created, from valley to valley and from city to city, we, in our way selling and buying, until we arrived

at the city of El-Basrah. We remained there a few days, and then I came to the city of Baghdád, the Abode of Peace, and came to my quarter, and entered my house, bringing with me a great quantity of diamonds, and money and commodities and goods in abundance. I met my family and relations, bestowed alms and gifts, made presents to all my family and companions, and began to eat well and drink well and wear handsome apparel. I associated with friends and companions, forgot all that I had suffered, and ceased not to enjoy a pleasant life and joyful heart and dilated bosom, with sport and merriment. Every one who heard of my arrival came to me, and inquired of me respecting my voyage, and the states of the different countries: so I informed him, relating to him what I had experienced and suffered; and he wondered at the severity of my sufferings, and congratulated me on my safety. — This is the end of the account of the events that befell me and happened to me during the second voyage; and to-morrow, if it be the will of God (whose name be exalted!), I will relate to you the events of the third voyage.

And when Sinbad of the Sea had finished his story to Sinbad of the Land, the company wondered at it. They supped with him; and he gave orders to present to Sinbad of the Land a hundred pieces of gold; and the latter took them, and went his way, wondering at the things that Sinbad of the Sea had suffered. He thanked him, and prayed for him in his house; and when the morning came, and diffused its light and shone, Sinbad the Porter arose, performed the morning-prayers, and repaired to the house of Sinbad of the Sea, as he had commanded him. He went in to him and wished him good morning, and Sinbad of the Sea welcomed him; and he sat with him until the rest of his companions and party had come; and after they had eaten and drunk, and enjoyed themselves, and were merry and happy, Sinbad of the Sea began thus: —

The Third Voyage of Sinbad of the Sea

Know, O my brothers (and hear from me the story of the third voyage, for it is more wonderful than the preceding stories, hitherto related — and God is all-knowing with respect to the things which He hideth, and omniscient), that, in the times past, when I returned from the second voyage, and was in a state of the utmost joy and happiness, rejoicing in my safety, having gained great wealth, as I related to you yesterday, God having compensated me for all that I had lost, I resided in the city of Baghdád for a length of time in the most perfect prosperity and delight, and joy and happiness. Then my soul became desirous of travel and diversion, and I longed for commerce and gain and profits; the soul being prone to evil. So I meditated, and bought an abundance of goods suited for a sea-voyage, and packed them up, and departed with them from the city

of Baghdád to the city of El-Basrah. There, coming to the bank of the river, I beheld a great vessel, in which were many merchants and other passengers, people of worth, and comely and good persons, people of religion and kindness and probity. I therefore embarked with them in that vessel, and we departed in reliance on the blessing of God (whose name be exalted!), and his aid and favour, rejoicing in expectation of good fortune and safety. We ceased not to proceed from sea to sea, and from island to island, and from city to city; at every place by which we passed diverting ourselves, and selling and buying, in the utmost joy and happiness. Thus we did until we were, one day, pursuing our course in the midst of the roaring sea, agitated with waves, when, lo, the master, standing at the side of the vessel, looked at the different quarters of the sea, and then slapped his face, furled the sails of the ship, cast its anchors, plucked his beard, rent his clothes, and uttered a great cry. So we said to him, O master, what is the news? And he answered, Know, O passengers, whom may God preserve! that the wind hath prevailed against us, and driven us out of our course in the midst of the sea, and destiny hath cast us, through our evil fortune, towards the Mountain of Apes. No one hath ever arrived at this place and escaped, and my heart is impressed with the conviction of the destruction of us all. — And the words of the master were not ended before the apes had come to us and surrounded the vessel on every side, numerous as locusts, dispersed about the vessel and on the shore. We feared that, if we killed one of them, or struck him, or drove him away, they would kill us, on account of their excessive number; for numbers prevail against courage; and we feared them lest they should plunder our goods and our commodities. They are the most hideous of beasts, and covered with hair like black felt, their aspect striking terror. No one understandeth their language or their state, they shun the society of men, have yellow eyes, and black faces, and are of small size, the height of each one of them being four spans. They climbed up the cables, and severed them with their teeth, and they severed all the ropes of the vessel in every part; so the vessel inclined with the wind, and stopped at their mountain, and on their coast. Then, having seized all the merchants and the other passengers, and landed upon the island, they took the vessel with the whole of its contents, and went their way with it.

They left us upon the island, the vessel became concealed from us, and we knew not whither they went with it. And while we were upon that island, eating of its fruits and its herbs, and drinking of the rivers that were there, lo, there appeared to us an inhabited house in the midst of the island. We therefore went towards it, and walked to it; and, behold, it was a pavilion, with lofty angles, with high walls, having an entrance with folding-doors, which were open; and the doors were of ebony. We entered this pavilion, and found in it a wide, open space, like a wide, large court, around which were many lofty doors, and at its upper end was a

high and great mastabah. There were also in it utensils for cooking, hung over the fire-pots, and around them were many bones. But we saw not there any person; and we wondered at that extremely. We sat in the open space in that pavilion a little while, after which we slept; and we ceased not to sleep from near the mid-time between sunrise and noon until sunset. And, lo, the earth trembled beneath us, and we heard a confused noise from the upper air, and there descended upon us, from the summit of the pavilion, a person of enormous size, in human form, and he was of black complexion, of lofty stature, like a great palm-tree: he had two eyes like two blazes of fire, and tusks like the tusks of swine, and a mouth of prodigious size, like the mouth of a well, and lips like the lips of the camel, hanging down upon his bosom, and he had ears like two mortars, hanging down upon his shoulders, and the nails of his hands were like the claws of the lion. So when we beheld him thus, we became unconscious of our existence, our fear was vehement, and our terror was violent, and through the violence of our fear and dread and terror we became as dead men. And after he had descended upon the ground, he sat a little while upon the mastabah. Then he arose and came to us, and, seizing me by my hands from among my companions the merchants, lifted me up from the ground in his hand, and felt me and turned me over; and I was in his hand like a little mouthful. He continued to feel me as the butcher feeleth the sheep that he is about to slaughter; but he found me infirm from excessive affliction, and lean from excessive fatigue and from the voyage; having no flesh. He therefore let me go from his hand, and took another, from among my companions; and he turned him over as he had turned me over, and felt him as he had felt me, and let him go. He ceased not to feel us and turn us over, one after another, until he came to the master of our ship, who was a fat, stout, broad-shouldered man; a person of strength and vigour: so he pleased him, and he seized him as the butcher seizeth the animal that he is about to slaughter, and, having thrown him on the ground, put his foot upon his neck, which he thus broke. Then he brought a long spit, and thrust it into his throat, and spitted him; after which he lighted a fierce fire, and placed over it that spit upon which the master was spitted, and ceased not to turn him round over the burning coals until his flesh was thoroughly roasted; when he took him off from the fire, put him before him, and separated his joints as a man separates the joints of a chicken, and proceeded to tear in pieces his flesh with his nails, and to eat of it. Thus he continued to do until he had eaten his flesh, and gnawed his bones, and there remained of him nothing but some bones, which he threw by the side of the pavilion. He then sat a little, and threw himself down, and slept upon that mastabah, making a noise with his throat like that which is made by a lamb or other beast when slaughtered; and he slept uninterruptedly until the morning, when he went his way.

As soon, thereforefore, as we were sure that he was far from us, we con-

versed together, and wept for ourselves, saying, Would that we had been drowned in the sea, or that the apes had eaten us; for it were better than the roasting of a man upon burning coals! By Allah, this death is a vile one! But what God willeth cometh to pass, and there is no strength nor power but in God, the High, the Great! We die in sorrow, and no one knoweth of us; and there is no escape for us from this place! We then arose and went forth upon the island, to see for us a place in which to hide ourselves, or to flee: and it had become a light matter to us to die, rather than that our flesh should be roasted with fire. But we found not for us a place in which to hide ourselves; and the evening overtook us. So we returned to the pavilion, by reason of the violence of our fear, and sat there a little while; and, lo, the earth trembled beneath us, and that black approached us, and, coming among us, began to turn us over, one after another, as on the former occasion, and to feel us, until one pleased him; whereupon he seized him, and did with him as he did with the master of the ship the day before. He roasted him, and ate him upon that mastabah, and ceased not to sleep that night, making a noise with his throat like a slaughtered animal; and when the day came, he arose and went his way, leaving us as usual. Upon this we assembled together and conversed and said, one to another, By Allah, if we cast ourselves into the sea and die drowned, it will be better than our dying burnt; for this mode of being put to death is abominable! And one of us said, Hear my words. Verily we will contrive a stratagem against him and kill him, and be at ease from apprehension of his purpose, and relieve the Muslims from his oppression and tyranny. — So I said to them, Hear, O my brothers. If we must kill him, we will transport this wood, and remove some of this firewood, and make for ourselves rafts, each to bear three men; after which we will contrive a stratagem to kill him, and embark on the rafts, and proceed over the sea to whatsoever place God shall desire. Or we will remain in this place until a ship shall pass by, when we will embark in it. And if we be not able to kill him, we will embark [on our rafts], and put out to sea; and if we be drowned, we shall be preserved from being roasted over the fire, and from being slaughtered. If we escape, we escape; and if we be drowned, we die martyrs. — To this they all replied, By Allah, this is a right opinion and a wise proceeding. And we agreed upon this matter, and commenced the work. We removed the pieces of wood out of the pavilion, and constructed rafts, attached them to the sea-shore, and stowed upon them some provisions; after which we returned to the pavilion.

And when it was evening, lo, the earth trembled with us, and the black came in to us, like the biting dog. He turned us over and felt us, one after another, and, having taken one of us, did with him as he had done with the others before him. He ate him, and slept upon the mastabah, and the noise from his throat was like thunder. So thereupon we arose, and took

two iron spits, of those which were set up, and put them in the fierce fire until they were red-hot, and became like burning coals; when we grasped them firmly, and went with them to that black while he lay asleep snoring, and we thrust them into his eyes, all of us pressing upon them with our united strength and force. Thus we pushed them into his eyes as he slept, and his eyes were destroyed, and he uttered a great cry, whereat our hearts were terrified. Then he arose resolutely from that mastabah and began to search for us, while we fled from him to the right and left, and he saw us not; for his sight was blinded; but we feared him with a violent fear, and made sure, in that time, of destruction, and despaired of safety. And upon this he sought the door, feeling for it, and went forth from it, crying out, while we were in the utmost fear of him; and, lo, the earth shook beneath us, by reason of the vehemence of his cry. So when he went forth from the pavilion, we followed him, and he went his way searching for us. Then he returned, accompanied by a female, greater than he, and more hideous in form; and when we beheld him, and her who was with him, more horrible than he in appearance, we were in the utmost fear. As soon as the female saw us, we hastily loosed the rafts that we had constructed, and embarked on them, and pushed them forth into the sea. But each of the two blacks had a mass of rock, and they cast at us until the greater number of us died from the casting, there remaining of us only three persons, I and two others; and the raft conveyed us to another island.

We walked forward upon that island until the close of the day, and the night overtook us in this state; so we slept a little; and we awoke from our sleep, and, lo, a serpent of enormous size, of large body and wide belly, had surrounded us. It approached one of us, and swallowed him to his shoulders: then it swallowed the rest of him, and we heard his ribs break in pieces in its belly; after which it went its way. At this we wondered extremely, and we mourned for our companion, and were in the utmost fear for ourselves, saying, By Allah, this is a wonderful thing! Every death that we witness is more horrible than the preceding one! We were rejoiced at our escape from the black; but our joy is not complete! There is no strength nor power but in God! By Allah, we have escaped from the black and from drowning; but how shall we escape from this unlucky serpent? — Then we arose and walked on over the island, eating of its fruits, and drinking of its rivers, and we ceased not to proceed till morning, when we found a great, lofty tree. So we climbed up it, and slept upon it; I having ascended to the highest of its branches. But when the night arrived, and it was dark, the serpent came, looking to the right and left, and, advancing to the tree upon which we were, came up to my companion, and swallowed him to his shoulders; and it wound itself round the tree with him, and I heard his bones break in pieces in its belly: then it swallowed him entirely, while I looked on; after which it descended from

the tree, and went its way. — I remained upon that tree the rest of the night; and when the day came, and the light appeared, I descended from the tree, like one dead, by reason of excessive fear and terror, and desired to cast myself into the sea, that I might be at rest from the world; but it was not a light matter to me to do so; for life is dear. So I tied a wide piece of wood upon the soles of my feet, crosswise, and I tied one like it upon my left side, and a similar one upon my right side, and a similar one upon the front of my body, and I tied one long and wide upon the top of my head, crosswise, like that which was under the soles of my feet. Thus I was in the midst of these pieces of wood, and they enclosed me on every side. I bound them tightly, and threw myself with the whole upon the ground; so I lay in the midst of the pieces of wood, which enclosed me like a closet. And when the evening arrived, the serpent approached as it was wont, and saw me, and drew towards me; but it could not swallow me when I was in that state, with the pieces of wood round me on every side. It went round me; but could not come at me: and I looked at it, being like a dead man, by reason of the violence of my fear and terror. The serpent retired from me, and returned to me; and thus it ceased not to do: every time that it desired to get at me to swallow me, the pieces of wood tied upon me on every side prevented it. It continued to do thus from sunset until daybreak arrived and the light appeared and the sun rose, when it went its way, in the utmost vexation and rage. Upon this, therefore, I stretched forth my hands and loosed myself from those pieces of wood, in a state like that of the dead, through the severity of that which I had suffered from that serpent.

I then arose, and walked along the island until I came to the extremity of it; when I cast a glance towards the sea, and beheld a ship at a distance, in the midst of the deep. So I took a great branch of a tree, and made a sign with it to the passengers, calling out to them; and when they saw me, they said, We must see what this is. Perhaps it is a man. — Then they approached me, and heard my cries to them. They therefore came to me, and took me with them in the ship, and asked me respecting my state: so I informed them of all that had happened to me from beginning to end, and of the troubles that I had suffered; whereat they wondered extremely. They clad me with some of their clothes, attiring me decently; and after that, they put before me some provisions, and I ate until I was satisfied. They also gave me to drink some cool and sweet water, and my heart was revived, my soul became at ease, and I experienced great comfort. God (whose name be exalted!) had raised me to life after my death: so I praised Him (exalted be his name!) for his abundant favours, and thanked Him. My courage was strengthened after I had made sure of destruction, so that it seemed to me that all which I then experienced was a dream. — We proceeded on our voyage, and the wind was fair to us by the permission of God (whose name be exalted!) until we came in sight of an island

called the Island of Es-Selhâit, where sandal-wood is abundant, and there the master anchored the ship, and the merchants and other passengers landed, and took forth their goods to sell and buy. The owner of the ship then looked towards me, and said to me, Hear my words. Thou art a stranger and poor, and hast informed us that thou hast suffered many horrors; I therefore desire to benefit thee with something that will aid thee to reach thy country, and thou wilt pray for me. — I replied, So be it and thou shalt have my prayers. And he rejoined, Know that there was with us a man voyaging, whom we lost, and we know not whether he be living or dead, having heard no tidings of him. I desire to commit to thee his bales that thou mayest sell them in this island. Thou shalt take charge of them, and we will give thee something proportionate to thy trouble and thy service; and what remaineth of them we will take and keep until we return to the city of Baghdád, when we will inquire for the owner's family, and give to them the remainder, together with the price of that which shall be sold of them. Wilt thou then take charge of them, and land with them upon this island, and sell them as do the merchants? — I answered, I hear and obey thee, O my master; and thou art beneficent and kind. And I prayed for him and thanked him for that.

He thereupon ordered the porters and sailors to land those goods upon the island, and to deliver them to me. And the clerk of the ship said, O master, what are these bales which the sailors and porters have brought out, and with the name of which of the merchants shall I mark them? He answered, Write upon them the name of Sinbad of the Sea, who was with us, and was drowned [or left behind] at the island [of the rukh'], and of whom no tidings have come to us; wherefore we desire that this stranger sell them, and take charge of the price of them, and we will give him somewhat of it in requital of his trouble and his sale of them. What shall remain we will take with us until we return to the city of Baghdád, when, if we find him, we will give it to him; and if we find him not, we will give it to his family in Baghdád. — So the clerk replied, Thy words are good, and thy notion is excellent. And when I heard the words of the master, mentioning that the bales were to be inscribed with my name, I said within myself, By Allah, I am Sinbad of the Sea. Then I fortified myself, and waited till the merchants had landed and had assembled conversing and consulting upon affairs of selling and buying, when I advanced to the owner of the ship, and said to him, O my master, dost thou know what manner of man was the owner of the bales which thou hast committed to me that I may sell them? — He answered me, I know not his condition; but he was a man of the city of Baghdád, called Sinbad of the Sea; and we had cast anchor at one of the islands, where he was lost, and we have had no tidings of him to the present time. So upon this I uttered a great cry, and said to him, O master (whom may God preserve!), know that I am Sinbad of the Sea. I was not

drowned; but when thou anchoredst at the island, and the merchants and other passengers landed, I also landed with the party, taking with me something to eat on the shore of the island. Then I enjoyed myself in sitting in that place, and, slumber overtaking me, I slept, and became immersed in sleep; after which I arose, and found not the ship, nor found I any one with me. Therefore this wealth is my wealth, and these goods are my goods. All the merchants also who transport diamonds saw me when I was upon the mountain of the diamonds, and they will bear witness for me that I am Sinbad of the Sea, as I informed them of my story and of the events that befell me with you in the ship. I informed them that ye had forgotten me upon the island, asleep, and that I arose and found not any one, and that what had befallen me befell me.

And when the merchants and other passengers heard my words, they assembled around me; and some of them believed me, and others disbelieved me. But while we were thus talking, lo, one of the merchants, on his hearing me mention the valley of diamonds, arose and advanced to me, and said to them, Hear, O company, my words. When I related to you the most wonderful thing that I had seen in my travels, I told you that, when we cast down the slaughtered animals into the valley of diamonds, I casting down mine with the rest, as I was accustomed to do, there came up with my slaughtered beast a man attached to it, and ye believed me not, but accused me of falsehood. — They replied, Yes: thou didst relate to us this thing, and we believed thee not. And the merchant said to them, This is the man who attached himself to my slaughtered animal, and he gave me some diamonds of high price, the like of which exist not, rewarding me with more than would have come up with my slaughtered animal; and I took him as my companion until we arrived at the city of El-Basrah, whence he proceeded to his country, having bidden us farewell, and we returned to our own countries. This is he, and he informed us that his name was Sinbad of the Sea: he told us likewise of the departure of the ship, and of his sitting in that island. And know ye that this man came not to us here but in order that ye might believe my words respecting the matter which I told you; and all these goods are his property; for he informed us of them at the time of his meeting with us, and the truth of his assertion hath become manifest. — So when the master heard the words of that merchant, he arose and came to me, and, having looked at me awhile with a scrutinizing eye, said, What is the mark of thy goods? I answered him, Know that the mark of my goods is of such and such a kind. And I related to him a circumstance that had occurred between me and him when I embarked with him in the vessel from El-Basrah. He therefore was convinced that I was Sinbad of the Sea, and he embraced me and saluted me, and congratulated me on my safety, saying to me, By Allah, O my master, thy story is wonderful, and thy case is extraordinary! But praise be to God who hath brought us together, and restored thy goods and thy wealth to thee!

Upon this, I disposed of my goods according to the knowledge I possessed, and they procured me, during that voyage, great gain, whereat I rejoiced exceedingly, congratulating myself on my safety, and on the restoration of my wealth to me. And we ceased not to sell and buy at the islands until we arrived at the country of Es-Sind, where likewise we sold and bought. And I beheld in that sea [which we navigated, namely the Sea of India,] many wonders and strange things that cannot be numbered nor calculated. Among the things that I saw there were a fish in the form of the cow, and a creature in the form of the ass; and I saw a bird that cometh forth from a sea-shell, and layeth its eggs and hatcheth them upon the surface of the water, and never cometh forth from the sea upon the face of the earth. — After this we continued our voyage, by permission of God (whose name be exalted!), and the wind and voyage were pleasant to us, until we arrived at El-Basrah, where I remained a few days. Then I came to the city of Baghdád, and repaired to my quarter, entered my house, and saluted my family and companions and friends. I rejoiced at my safety and my return to my country and my family and city and district, and I gave alms and presents, and clad the widows and the orphans, and collected my companions and friends. And I ceased not to live thus, eating and drinking, and sporting and making merry, eating well and drinking well, associating familiarly and mingling in society; and I forgot all that had happened to me, and the distresses and horrors that I had suffered. And I gained during that voyage what could not be numbered nor calculated. — Such were the most wonderful of the things that I beheld during that voyage; and to-morrow, if it be the will of God (whose name be exalted!), thou shalt come, [O Sinbad of the Land,] and I will relate to thee the story of the fourth voyage; for it is more wonderful than the stories of the preceding voyages.

Then Sinbad of the Sea gave orders to present to the porter a hundred pieces of gold, as usual, and commanded to spread the table. So they spread it, and the company supped, wondering at that story and at the events described in it; and after the supper, they went their ways. Sinbad the Porter took the gold that Sinbad of the Sea had ordered to be given to him, and went his way, wondering at that which he had heard, and passed the night in his house; and when the morning came, and diffused its light and shone, he arose, and performed the morning-prayers, and walked to the house of Sinbad of the Sea. He went in to him and saluted him; and he received him with joy and gayety, and made him sit by him until the rest of his companions had come; when the servants brought forward the food, and the party ate and drank and enjoyed themselves. Then Sinbad of the Sea began to address them, and related to them the fourth story, saying, —

The Fourth Voyage of Sinbad of the Sea

Know, O my brothers, that when I returned to the city of Baghdád and met my companions and my family and my friends, and was enjoying the utmost pleasure and happiness and ease, and had forgotten all that I had experienced, by reason of the abundance of my gains, and had become immersed in sport and mirth, and the society of friends and companions, leading the most delightful life, my wicked soul suggested to me to travel again to the countries of other people, and I felt a longing for associating with the different races of men, and for selling and gains. So I resolved upon this, and purchased precious goods, suitable to a sea-voyage, and, having packed up many bales, more than usual, I went from the city of Baghdád to the city of El-Basrah, where I embarked my bales in a ship, and joined myself to a party of the chief men of El-Basrah, and we set forth on our voyage. The vessel proceeded with us, confiding in the blessing of God (whose name be exalted!), over the roaring sea agitated with waves, and the voyage was pleasant to us; and we ceased not to proceed in this manner for a period of nights and days, from island to island and from sea to sea, until a contrary wind rose against us one day. The master therefore cast the anchors, and stayed the ship in the midst of the sea, fearing that she would sink in the midst of the deep. And while we were in this state, supplicating, and humbling ourselves to God (whose name be exalted!), there rose against us a great tempest, which rent the sails in strips, and the people were submerged with all their bales and their commodities and wealth. I was submerged among the rest, and I swam in the sea for half a day, after which I abandoned myself; but God (whose name be exalted!) aided me to lay hold upon a piece of one of the planks of the ship, and I and a party of the merchants got upon it. We continued sitting upon this plank, striking the sea with our feet, and the waves and the wind helping us; and we remained in this state a day and a night. And on the following day, shortly before the midtime between sunrise and noon, a wind rose against us, the sea became boisterous, the waves and the wind were violent, and the water cast us upon an island; and we were like dead men, from excess of sleeplessness and fatigue, and cold and hunger, and fear and thirst.

We walked along the shores of that island, and found upon it abundant herbs; so we ate some of them to stay our departing spirits, and to sustain us; and passed the next night upon the shore of the island. And when the morning came, and diffused its light and shone, we arose and walked about the island to the right and left, and there appeared to us a building in the distance. We therefore proceeded over the island in the direction of that building which we had seen from a distance, and ceased not to proceed until we stood at its door. And while we were standing there, lo, there came forth to us from that door a party of naked men, who, without

speaking to us, seized us, and took us to their King, and he commanded us to sit. So we sat; and they brought to us some food, such as we knew not, nor in our lives had we seen the like of it; wherefore my stomach consented not to it, and I ate none of it in comparison with my companions, and my eating so little of it was owing to the grace of God (whose name be exalted!), in consequence of which I have lived to the present time. For when my companions ate of that food, their minds became stupefied, and they ate like madmen, and their states became changed. Then the people brought to them cocoa-nut oil, and gave them to drink of it, and anointed them with it; and when my companions drank of that oil, their eyes became turned in their faces, and they proceeded to eat of that food contrary to their usual manner. Upon this, therefore, I was confounded respecting their case, and grieved for them, and became extremely anxious by reason of the violence of my fear for myself with regard to these naked men. I observed them attentively, and, lo, they were a Magian people, and the King of their city was a ghool; and every one who arrived at their country, or whom they saw or met in the valley or the roads, they brought to their King, and they fed him with that food, and anointed him with that oil, in consequence of which his body became expanded, in order that he might eat largely; and his mind was stupefied, his faculty of reflection was destroyed, and he became like an idiot. Then they gave him to eat and drink in abundance of that food and oil, until he became fat and stout, when they slaughtered him and roasted him, and served him as meat to their King. But as to the companions of the King, they ate the flesh of men without roasting or otherwise cooking it. So when I saw them do thus, I was in the utmost anguish on my own account, and on account of my companions. The latter, by reason of the excessive stupefaction of their minds, knew not what was done unto them, the people committed them to a person who took them every day and went forth to pasture them on that island like cattle.

But as for myself, I became, through the violence of fear and hunger, infirm and wasted in body, and my flesh dried upon my bones. So when they saw me in this state, they left me and forgot me, and not one of them remembered me, nor did I occur to their minds, until I contrived a stratagem one day, and, going forth from that place, walked along the island to a distance. And I saw a herdsman sitting upon something elevated in the midst of the sea; and I certified myself of him, and, lo, he was the man to whom they had committed my companions that he might pasture them; and he had with him many like them. As soon, therefore, as that man beheld me, he knew that I was in possession of my reason, and that nought of that which had afflicted my companions had afflicted me. So he made a sign to me from a distance, and said to me, Turn back, and go along the road that is on thy right hand: thou wilt so reach the King's highway. Accordingly I turned back, as this man directed me, and, seeing

a road on my right hand, I proceeded along it, and ceased not to go on, sometimes running by reason of fear, and sometimes walking at my leisure until I had taken rest. Thus I continued to do until I was hidden from the eyes of the man who directed me to the way, and I saw him not nor did he see me. The sun had disappeared from me, and darkness approached; wherefore I sat to rest, and desired to sleep; but sleep came not to me that night on account of the violence of my fear and hunger and fatigue. And when it was midnight, I arose and walked on over the island, and I ceased not to proceed until day arrived, and the morning came and diffused its light and shone, and the sun rose over the tops of the high hills and over the low gravelly plains. I was tired and hungry and thirsty: so I began to eat of the herbs and vegetables that were upon the island, and continued to eat of them till I was satiated, and my departing spirit was stayed; after which I arose and walked on again over the island; and thus I ceased not to do all the day and the next night; whenever I was hungry, eating of the vegetables.

In this manner I proceeded for the space of seven days with their nights; and on the morning of the eighth day, I cast a glance, and beheld a faint object in the distance. So I went towards it, and ceased not to proceed until I came up to it, after sunset; and I looked at it with a scrutinizing eye, while I was yet distant from it, and with a fearful heart in consequence of what I had suffered first and after, and, lo, it was a party of men gathering pepper. And when I approached them, and they saw me, they hastened to me, and came to me and surrounded me on every side, saying to me, Who art thou, and whence hast thou come? I answered them, Know ye, O people, that I am a poor foreigner. And I informed them of my whole case, and of the horrors and distresses that had befallen me, and what I had suffered; whereupon they said, By Allah, this is a wonderful thing! But how didst thou escape from the blacks, and how didst thou pass by them in this island, when they are a numerous people, and eat men, and no one is safe from them, nor can any pass by them? — So I acquainted them with that which had befallen me among them, and with the manner in which they had taken my companions, and fed them with food of which I did not eat. And they congratulated me on my safety, and wondered at that which had befallen me. Then they made me sit among them until they had finished their work, and they brought me some nice food. I therefore ate of it, being hungry and rested with them a while; after which they took me and embarked with me in a vessel, and went to their island and their abodes. They then took me to their King, and I saluted him, and he welcomed me and treated me with honour, and inquired of me my story. So I related to him what I had experienced, and what had befallen me and happened to me from the day of my going forth from the city of Baghdád until I had come unto him. And the King wondered extremely at my story, and at the

events that had happened to me; he, and all who were present in his assembly. After that, he ordered me to sit with him. Therefore I sat; and he gave orders to bring the food, which accordingly they brought, and I ate of it as much as sufficed me, and washed my hands, and offered up thanks for the favour of God (whose name be exalted!), praising Him and glorifying Him. I then rose from the presence of the King, and diverted myself with a sight of his city; and, lo, it was a flourishing city, abounding with inhabitants and wealth, and with food and markets and goods, and sellers and buyers.

So I rejoiced at my arrival at that city, and my heart was at ease; I became familiar with its inhabitants, and was magnified and honoured by them and by their King above the people of his dominions and the great men of his city. And I saw that all its great men and its small rode excellent and fine horses without saddles; whereat I wondered; and I said to the King, Wherefore, O my lord, dost thou not ride on a saddle; for therein is ease to the rider, and additional power? He said, What kind of thing is a saddle? This is a thing that in our lives we have never seen, nor have we ever ridden upon it. — And I said to him, Wilt thou permit me to make for thee a saddle to ride upon and to experience the pleasure of it? He answered me, Do so. I therefore said to him, Furnish me with some wood. And he gave orders to bring me all that I required. Then I asked for a clever carpenter, and sat with him, and taught him the construction of the saddle, and how he should make it. Afterwards I took some wool, and teased it, and made felt of it, and I caused some leather to be brought, and covered the saddle with it, and polished it. I then attached its straps and its girth: after which I brought the blacksmith, and described to him the form of the stirrups, and he forged an excellent pair of stirrups; and I filed them, and tinned them. Then I attached fringes of silk. Having done this, I arose and brought one of the best of the King's horses, girded upon him that saddle, attached to it the stirrups, bridled him, and brought him forward to the King; and it pleased him, and was agreeable to him. He thanked me, and seated himself upon it, and was greatly delighted with that saddle; and he gave me a large present as a reward for that which I done for him. And when his Wezeer saw that I had made that saddle, he desired of me one like it. So I made for him a saddle like it. The grandees and dignitaries likewise desired of me saddles, and I made for them. I taught the carpenter the construction of the saddle; and the blacksmith, the mode of making stirrups; and we employed ourselves in making these things, and sold them to the great men and masters. Thus I collected abundant wealth, and became in high estimation with them, and they loved me exceedingly.

I continued to enjoy a high rank with the King and his attendants and the great men of the country and the lords of the state, until I sat one day with the King, in the utmost happiness and honour; and while I was

sitting, the King said to me, Know, O thou, that thou hast become magnified and honoured among us, and hast become one of us, and we cannot part with thee, nor can we suffer thee to depart from our city; and I desire of thee that thou obey me in an affair, and reject not that which I shall say. So I said to him, And what dost thou desire of me, O King? For I will not reject that which thou shalt say, since thou hast shown favour and kindness and beneficence to me, and (praise be to God!) I have become one of thy servants. — And he answered, I desire to marry thee among us to a beautiful, lovely, elegant wife, possessed of wealth and loveliness, and thou shalt become a dweller with us, and I will lodge thee by me in my palace: therefore oppose me not, nor reject what I say. And when I heard the words of the King, I was abashed at him, and was silent, returning him no answer, by reason of the exceeding bashfulness with which I regarded him. So he said, Wherefore dost thou not reply to me, O my son? And I answered him, O my master, it is thine to command, O King of the age! And upon this he sent immediately and caused the Kádee and the witnesses to come, and married me forthwith to a woman of noble rank, of high lineage, possessing abundant wealth and fortune, of great origin, of surprising loveliness and beauty, owner of dwellings and possessions and buildings. Then he gave me a great, handsome house standing alone, and he gave me servants and other dependants, and assigned me supplies and salaries. Thus I became in a state of the utmost ease and joy and happiness, forgetting all the fatigue and affliction and adversity that had happened to me; and I said within myself, When I set forth on my voyage to my country, I will take her with me. But every event that is predestined to happen to man must inevitably take place, and no one knoweth what will befall him. I loved her and she loved me with a great affection, concord existed between me and her, and we lived in a most delightful manner, and most comfortable abode, and ceased not to enjoy this state for a length of time.

Then God (whose name be exalted!) caused to die the wife of my neighbour, and he was a companion of mine. So I went in to him to console him for the loss of his wife, and beheld him in a most evil state, anxious, weary in soul and heart; and upon this I consoled him and comforted him, saying to him, Mourn not for thy wife. God will happily compensate thee by giving thee one better than she, and thy life will be long if it be the will of God, whose name be exalted! — But he wept violently, and said to me, O my companion, how can I marry another after her, or how can God compensate me by giving me a better than she, when but one day remaineth of my life? So I replied, O my brother, return to thy reason, and do not announce thine own death; for thou art well, in prosperity and health. But he said to me, O my companion, by thy life, to-morrow thou wilt lose me, and never in thy life wilt thou see me again. — And how so? said I. He answered me, This day they will

bury my wife, and they will bury me with her in the sepulchre; for it is our custom in our country, when the wife dieth, to bury with her her husband alive; and when the husband dieth, they bury with him his wife alive; that neither of them may enjoy life after the other. I therefore said to him, By Allah, this custom is exceedingly vile, and none can endure it! — And while we were thus conversing, lo, most of the people of the city came, and proceeded to console my companion for the loss of his wife and for himself. They began to prepare her body for burial according to their custom, brought a bier, and carried the woman in it, with all her apparel and ornaments and wealth, taking the husband with them; and they went forth with them to the outside of the city, and came to a place in the side of a mountain by the sea. They advanced to a spot there, and lifted up from it a great stone, and there appeared, beneath the place of this, a margin of stone, like the margin of a well. Into this they threw down that woman; and, lo, it was a great pit beneath the mountain. Then they brought the man, tied him beneath his bosom by a rope of fibres of the palm-tree, and let him down into the pit. They also let down to him a great jug of sweet water, and seven cakes of bread; and when they had let him down, he loosed himself from the rope, and they drew it up, and covered the mouth of the pit with that great stone as it was before, and went their ways, leaving my companion with his wife in the pit. — So I said within myself, By Allah, this death is more grievous than the first death! I then went to their King, and said to him, O my lord, how is it that ye bury the living with the dead in your country? And he answered me, Know that this is our custom in our country: when the husband dieth, we bury with him his wife; and when the wife dieth, we bury with her her husband alive; that we may not separate them in life nor in death; and this custom we have received from our forefathers. And I said, O King of the age, and in like manner the foreigner like me, when his wife dieth among you do ye with him as ye have done with this man? He answered me, Yes: we bury him with her, and do with him as thou hast seen. And when I heard these words from him, my gall-bladder almost burst by reason of the violence of my grief and mourning for myself; my mind was stupefied, and I became fearful lest my wife should die before me and they should bury me alive with her. Afterwards, however, I comforted myself, and said, Perhaps I shall die before her: and no one knoweth which will precede and which will follow. And I proceeded to beguile myself with occupations.

And but a short time had elapsed after that when my wife fell sick, and she remained so a few days, and died. So the greater number of the people assembled to console me, and to console her family for her death; and the King also came to console me for the loss of her, as was their custom. They then brought for her a woman to wash her, and they washed her, and decked her with the richest of her apparel, and ornaments of gold, and

necklaces and jewels. And when they had attired my wife and put her in the bier, and carried her and gone with her to that mountain, and lifted up the stone from the mouth of the pit, and cast her into it, all my companions, and the family of my wife, advanced to bid me farewell and to console me for the loss of my life. I was crying out among them, I am a foreigner, and am unable to endure your custom! But they would not hear what I said, nor pay any regard to my words. They laid hold upon me and bound me by force, tying with me seven cakes of bread and a jug of sweet water, according to their custom, and let me down into that pit. And, lo, it was a great cavern beneath that mountain. They said to me, Loose thyself from the ropes. But I would not loose myself. So they threw the ropes down upon me, and covered the mouth of the pit with the great stone that was upon it, and went their ways. I beheld in that cavern many dead bodies, and their smell was putrid and abominable; and I blamed myself for that which I had done, saying, By Allah, I deserve all that happeneth to me and befalleth me! I knew not night from day; and I sustained myself with little food, not eating until hunger almost killed me, nor drinking until my thirst became violent, fearing the exhaustion of the food and water that I had with me. I said, There is no strength nor power but in God, the High, the Great! What tempted me to marry in this city? And every time that I say, I have escaped from a calamity, I fall into a calamity that is more mighty than the preceding one! By Allah, my dying this death is unfortunate! Would that I had been drowned in the sea, or had died upon the mountains! It had been better for me than this evil death! — And I continued in this manner, blaming myself. I laid myself down upon the bones of the dead, begging aid of God (whose name be exalted!), and wished for death, but I found it not, by reason of the severity of my sufferings. Thus I remained until hunger burned my stomach, and thirst inflamed me; when I sat, and felt for the bread, and ate a little of it, and I swallowed after it a little water. Then I rose and stood up, and walked about the sides of the cavern; and I found that it was spacious sideways, and with vacant cavities; but upon its bottom were numerous dead bodies, and rotten bones, that had laid there from old times. And upon this I made for myself a place in the side of the cavern, remote from the fresh corpses, and there I slept.

At length my provision became greatly diminished, little remaining with me. During each day, or in more than a day, I had eaten but once, and drunk one draught, fearing the exhaustion of the water and food that was with me before my death; and I ceased not to do thus until I was sitting one day, and while I sat, meditating upon my case, thinking what I should do when my food and water were exhausted, lo, the mass of rock was removed from its place, and the light beamed down upon me. So I said, What can be the matter? And, behold, the people were standing at the top of the pit, and they let down a dead man with his wife with him

alive, and she was weeping and crying out for herself; and they let down with her a large quantity of food and water. I saw the woman; but she saw not me; and they covered the mouth of the pit with the stone, and went their ways. Then I arose, and, taking in my hand a long bone of a dead man, I went to the woman, and struck her upon the middle of the head; whereupon she fell down senseless; and I struck her a second and a third time, and she died. So I took her bread and what else she had, and I found upon her abundance of ornaments and apparel, necklaces and jewels and minerals. And having taken the water and food that was with her, I sat in a place that I had prepared in a side of the cavern, wherein to sleep, and proceeded to eat a little of that food, as much only as would sustain me, lest it should be exhausted quickly, and I should die of hunger and thirst.

I remained in that cavern a length of time; and whenever they buried a corpse, I killed the person who was buried with it alive, and took that person's food and drink, to subsist upon it, until I was sleeping one day, and I awoke from my sleep, and heard something make a noise in a side of the cavern. So I said, What can this be? I then arose and walked towards it, taking with me a long bone of a dead man; and when it was sensible of my presence, it ran away, and fled from me; and, lo, it was a wild beast. But I followed it to the upper part of the cavern, and thereupon a light appeared to me from a small spot, like a star. Sometimes it appeared to me, and sometimes it was concealed from me. Therefore when I saw it, I advanced towards it; and the nearer I approached to it, the larger did the light from it appear to me. So upon this I was convinced that it was a hole in that cavern, communicating with the open country; and I said within myself, There must be some cause for this: either it is a second mouth, like that from which they let me down, or it is a fissure in this place. I meditated in my mind a while, and advanced towards the light; and, lo, it was a perforation in the back of that mountain, which the wild beasts had made, and through which they entered this place; and they ate of the dead bodies until they were satiated, and went forth through this perforation. When I saw it, therefore, my mind was quieted, my soul was tranquillized, and my heart was at ease; I made sure of life after death, and became as in a dream. Then I managed to force my way through that perforation, and found myself on the shore of the sea, upon a great mountain, which formed a barrier between the sea on the one side, and the island and city on the other, and to which no one could gain access. So I praised God (whose name be exalted!), and thanked Him, and rejoiced exceedingly, and my heart was strengthened. I then returned through that perforation into the cavern, and removed all the food and water that was in it, that I had spared. I also took the clothes of the dead, and clad myself in some of them, in addition to those I had on me; and I took abundance of the things that were on the dead, consisting of

varieties of necklaces and jewels, long necklaces of pearls, ornaments of silver and gold set with various minerals, and rarities; and, having tied up some clothes of the dead in apparel of my own, I went forth from the perforation to the back of the mountain, and stood upon the shore of the sea. Every day I entered the cavern, and explored it; and whenever they buried a person alive, I took the food and water, and killed that person, whether male or female; after which I went forth from the perforation, and sat upon the shore of the sea, to wait for relief from God (whose name be exalted!), by means of a ship passing by me. And I removed from that cavern all the ornaments that I found, and tied them up in the clothes of the dead.

I ceased not to remain in this state for a length of time; and afterwards, as I was sitting, one day, upon the shore of the sea, meditating upon my case, lo, a vessel passed along in the midst of the roaring sea agitated with waves. So I took in my hand a white garment, of the clothes of the dead, and tied it to a staff, and ran with it along the sea-shore, making a sign to the people with that garment until they happened to look, and saw me upon the summit of the mountain. They therefore approached me, and heard my voice, and sent to me a boat in which was a party of men from the ship; and when they drew near to me they said to me, Who art thou, and what is the reason of thy sitting in this place, and how didst thou arrive at this mountain; for in our lives we have never seen anyone who hath come unto it? So I answered them, I am a merchant. The vessel that I was in was wrecked, and I got upon a plank, together with my things, and God facilitated my landing at this place, with my things, by means of my exertion and my skill, after severe toil. They therefore took me with them in the boat, and embarked all that I had taken from the cavern, tied up in the garments and grave-clothes, and they proceeded with me until they took me up into the ship to the master, and all my things with me. And the master said to me, O man, how didst thou arrive at this place, which is a great mountain, with a great city behind it? All my life I have been accustomed to navigate this sea, and to pass by this mountain; but have never seen any thing there except the wild beasts and the birds. — I answered him, I am a merchant. I was in a great ship, and it was wrecked, and all my merchandise, consisting of these stuffs and clothes which thou seest, was submerged; but I placed it upon a great plank, one of the planks of the ship, and destiny and fortune aided me, so that I landed upon this mountain, where I waited for some one to pass by and take me with him. — And I acquainted them not with the events that had befallen me in the city, or in the cavern; fearing that there might be with them in the ship some one from that city. Then I took forth and presented to the owner of the ship a considerable portion of my property, saying to him, O my master, thou hast been the means of my escape from this mountain: therefore receive from me this as a recompense for the

favour which thou hast done to me. But he would not accept it from me; and he said to me, We take nothing from any one; and when we behold a shipwrecked person on the shore of the sea or on an island, we take him with us, and feed him and give him to drink; and if he be naked, we clothe him; and when we arrive at the port of safety, we give him something of our property as a present, and act towards him with kindness and favour for the sake of God, whose name be exalted! — So upon this I offered up prayers for the prolongation of his life.

We ceased not to proceed on our voyage from island to island and from sea to sea. I hoped to escape, and was rejoiced at my safety; but every time that I reflected upon my abode in the cavern with my wife, my reason left me. We pursued our course until we arrived at the Island of the Bell, whence we proceeded to the Island of Kelá in six days. Then we came to the kingdom of Kelá, which is adjacent to India, and in it are a mine of lead, and places where the Indian cane groweth, and excellent camphor; and its King is a King of great dignity, whose dominion extendeth over the Island of the Bell. In it is a city called the City of the Bell, which is two days' journey in extent. — At length, by the providence of God, we arrived in safety at the city of El-Basrah, where I landed, and remained a few days; after which I came to the city of Baghdád, and to my quarter, and entered my house, met my family and my companions, and made inquiries respecting them; and they rejoiced at my safety, and congratulated me. I stored all the commodities that I had brought with me in my magazines, gave alms and presents, and clad the orphans and the widows; and I became in a state of the utmost joy and happiness, and returned to my former habit of associating with familiars and companions and brothers, and indulging in sport and merriment. — Such were the most wonderful of the events that happened to me in the course of the fourth voyage. But, O my brother, [O Sinbad of the Land,] sup thou with me, and observe thy custom by coming to me to-morrow, when I will inform thee what happened to me and what befell me during the fifth voyage; for it was more wonderful and extraordinary than the preceding voyages.

He then gave orders to present the porter with a hundred pieces of gold, and the table was spread, and the party supped; after which they went their ways, wondering extremely; each story being more extraordinary than the preceding one. Sinbad the Porter went to his house, and passed the night in the utmost joy and happiness, and in wonder; and when the morning came, and diffused its light and shone, he arose, and performed the morning-prayers, and walked on until he entered the house of Sinbad of the Sea, and wished him good morning. And Sinbad of the Sea welcomed him, and ordered him to sit with him until the rest of his companions came. And they ate and drank, and enjoyed themselves and were merry, and conversation flowed round among them. Then Sinbad of the Sea began his narrative, saying thus: —

The Fifth Voyage of Sinbad of the Sea

Know, O my brothers, that when I returned from the fourth voyage, and became immersed in sport and merriment and joy, and had forgotten all that I had experienced, and what had befallen me, and what I had suffered, by reason of my excessive joy at the gain and profit and benefits that I had obtained, my mind again suggested to me to travel, and to divert myself with the sight of the countries of other people, and the islands. So I arose and meditated upon that subject, and bought precious goods, suited for a sea voyage. I packed up the bales, and departed from the city of Baghdád to the city of El-Basrah; and, walking along the bank of the river, I saw a great, handsome, lofty vessel, and it pleased me; wherefore I purchased it. Its apparatus was new, and I hired for it a master and sailors, over whom I set my black slaves and my pages as superintendents, and I embarked in it my bales. And there came to me a company of merchants, who also embarked their bales in it, and paid me hire. We set sail in the utmost joy and happiness, and rejoicing in the prospect of safety and gain, and ceased not to pursue our voyage from island to island and from sea to sea, diverting ourselves with viewing the islands and towns, and landing at them and selling and buying. Thus we continued to do until we arrived one day at a large island, destitute of inhabitants. There was no person upon it: it was deserted and desolate; but on it was an enormous white dome, of great bulk; and we landed to amuse ourselves with a sight of it, and, lo, it was a great egg of a rukh′. Now when the merchants had landed, and were diverting themselves with viewing it, not knowing that it was the egg of a rukh′, they struck it with stones; whereupon it broke, and there poured down from it a great quantity of liquid, and the young rukh′ appeared within it. So they pulled it and drew it forth from the shell, and killed it, and took from it abundance of meat. I was then in the ship, and knew not of it, and they acquainted me not with that which they did. But in the mean time one of the passengers said to me, O my master, arise and divert thyself with the sight of this egg which we imagined to be a dome. I therefore arose to take a view of it, and found the merchants striking the egg. I called out to them, Do not this deed; for the rukh′ will come and demolish our ship, and destroy us. But they would not hear my words.

And while they were doing as above related, behold, the sun became concealed from us, and the day grew dark, and there came over us a cloud by which the sky was obscured. So we raised our heads to see what had intervened between us and the sun, and saw that the wings of the rukh′ were what veiled from us the sun's light, so that the sky was darkened. And when the rukh′ came, and beheld its egg broken, it cried out at us; whereupon its mate, the female bird, came to it, and they flew in circles over the ship, crying out at us with a voice more vehement than

thunder. So I called out to the master and the sailors, and said to them, Push off the vessel, and seek safety before we perish. The master therefore hastened, and, the merchants having embarked, he loosed the ship, and we departed from that island. And when the rukh's saw that we had put forth to sea, they absented themselves from us for a while. We proceeded, and made speed, desiring to escape from them, and to quit their country; but, lo, they had followed us, and they now approached us, each of them having in its claws a huge mass of rock from a mountain; and the male bird threw the rock that he had brought upon us. The master, however, steered away the ship, and the mass of rock missed her by a little space. It descended into the sea by the ship, and the ship went up with us, and down, by reason of the mighty plunging of the rock, and we beheld the bottom of the sea in consequence of its vehement force. Then the mate of the male rukh' threw upon us the rock that she had brought, which was smaller than the former one, and, as destiny had ordained, it fell upon the stern of the ship, and crushed it, making the rudder fly into twenty pieces, and all that was in the ship became submerged in the sea.

I strove to save myself, impelled by the sweetness of life, and God (whose name be exalted!) placed within my reach one of the planks of the ship; so I caught hold of it, and, having got upon it, began to row upon it with my feet, and the wind and the waves helped me forward. The vessel had sunk near an island in the midst of the sea, and destiny cast me, by permission of God (whose name be exalted!), to that island. I therefore landed upon it; but I was at my last breath, and in the state of the dead, from the violence of the fatigue and distress and hunger and thirst that I had suffered. I then threw myself down upon the shore of the sea, and remained lying there a while, until my soul felt at ease, and my heart was tranquillized, when I walked along the island, and saw that it resembled one of the gardens of Paradise. Its trees bore ripe fruits, its rivers were flowing, and its birds were warbling the praises of Him to whom belongeth might and permanence. Upon that island was an abundance of trees and fruits, with varieties of flowers. So I ate of the fruits until I was satiated, and I drank of those rivers until I was satisfied with drink; and I praised God (whose name be exalted!) for this, and glorified Him. I then remained sitting upon the island till evening came, and night approached; whereupon I rose; but I was like a slain man, by reason of the fatigue and fear that I had experienced; and I heard not in that island a voice, nor did I see in it any person.

I slept there without interruption until the morning, and then rose and stood up, and walked among the trees; and I saw a streamlet, by which sat an old man, a comely person, who was clad from the waist downwards with a covering made of the leaves of trees. So I said within myself, Perhaps this old man hath landed upon this island and is one of the shipwrecked persons with whom the vessel fell to pieces. I then ap-

proached him and saluted him, and he returned the salutation by a sign, without speaking; and I said to him, O sheykh, what is the reason of thy sitting in this place? Whereupon he shook his head, and sighed, and made a sign to me with his hand, as though he would say, Carry me upon thy neck, and transport me from this place to the other side of the streamlet. I therefore said within myself, I will act kindly with this person, and transport him to this place to which he desireth to go: perhaps I shall obtain for it a reward [in heaven]. Accordingly I advanced to him, and took him upon my shoulders, and conveyed him to the place that he had indicated to me; when I said to him, Descend at thine ease. But he descended not from my shoulders. He had twisted his legs round my neck, and I looked at them, and I saw that they were like the hide of the buffalo in blackness and roughness. So I was frightened at him, and desired to throw him down from my shoulders; but he pressed upon my neck with his feet, and squeezed my throat, so that the world became black before my face, and I was unconscious of my existence, falling upon the ground in a fit, like one dead. He then raised his legs, and beat me upon my back and my shoulders; and I suffered violent pain; wherefore I rose with him. He still kept his seat upon my shoulders, and I had become fatigued with bearing him; and he made a sign to me that I should go in among the trees, to the best of the fruits. When I disobeyed him, he inflicted upon me, with his feet, blows more violent than those of whips; and he ceased not to direct me with his hand to every place to which he desired to go, and to that place I went with him. If I loitered, or went leisurely, he beat me; and I was as a captive to him. We went into the midst of the island, among the trees, and he descended not from my shoulders by night nor by day: when he desired to sleep, he would wind his legs round my neck, and sleep a little, and then he would arise and beat me, whereupon I would arise with him quickly, unable to disobey him, by reason of the severity of that which I suffered from him; and I blamed myself for having taken him up, and having had pity on him. I continued with him in this condition, enduring the most violent fatigue, and said within myself, I did a good act unto this person, and it hath become an evil to myself. By Allah, I will never more do good unto any one as long as I live! — I begged of God (whose name be exalted!), at every period and in every hour, that I might die, in consequence of the excessive fatigue and distress that I suffered.

Thus I remained for a length of time, until I carried him one day to a place in the island where I found an abundance of pumpkins, many of which were dry. Upon this I took a large one that was dry, and, having opened its upper extremity, and cleansed it, I went with it to a grape-vine, and filled it with the juice of the grapes. I then stopped up the aperture, and put it in the sun, and left it for some days, until it had become pure wine; and every day I used to drink of it, to help myself to endure

the fatigue that I underwent with that obstinate devil; for whenever I was intoxicated by it, my energy was strengthened. So, seeing me one day drinking, he made a sign to me with his hand, as though he would say, What is this? And I answered him, This is something agreeable, that invigorateth the heart, and dilateth the mind. Then I ran with him, and danced among the trees; I was exhilarated by intoxication, and clapped my hands, and sang, and was joyful. Therefore when he beheld me in this state, he made a sign to me to hand him the pumpkin, that he might drink from it; and I feared him, and gave it to him; whereupon he drank what remained in it, and threw it upon the ground, and, being moved with merriment, began to shake upon my shoulders. He then became intoxicated, and drowned in intoxication; all his limbs, and the muscles of his sides became relaxed, and he began to lean from side to side upon my shoulders, So when I knew that he was drunk, and that he was unconscious of existence, I put my hand to his feet, and loosed them from my neck. Then I stooped with him, and sat down, and threw him upon the ground. I scarcely believed that I had liberated myself and escaped from the state in which I had been; but I feared him, lest he should arise from his intoxication, and torment me. I therefore took a great mass of stone from among the trees, and, coming to him, struck him upon his head as he lay asleep, so that his flesh became mingled with his blood, and he was killed. May no mercy of God be on him!

After that, I walked about the island, with a happy mind, and came to the place where I was before, on the shore of the sea. And I remained upon that island, eating of its fruits, and drinking of the water of its rivers, for a length of time, and watching to see some vessel passing by me, until I was sitting one day, reflecting upon the events that had befallen me and happened to me, and I said within myself, I wonder if God will preserve me in safety, and if I shall return to my country, and meet my family and my companions. And, lo, a vessel approached from the midst of the roaring sea agitated with waves, and it ceased not in its course until it anchored at that island; whereupon the passengers landed there. So I walked towards them; and when they beheld me, they all quickly approached me, and assembled around me, inquiring respecting my state, and the cause of my coming to that island. I therefore acquainted them with my case, and with the events that had befallen me; whereat they wondered extremely. And they said to me, This man who rode upon thy shoulders is called the Old Man of the Sea, and no one ever was beneath his limbs and escaped from him except thee; and praise be to God for thy safety! Then they brought me some food, and I ate until I was satisfied; and they gave me some clothing, which I put on, covering myself decently. After this, they took me with them in the ship, and when we had proceeded days and nights, destiny drove us to a city of lofty buildings, all the houses of which overlooked the sea. That city is called

the City of the Apes; and when the night cometh, the people who reside in it go forth from the doors that open upon the sea, and, embarking in boats and ships, pass the night upon the sea, in their fear of the apes, lest they should come down upon them in the night from the mountains.

I landed to divert myself in this city, and the ship set sail without my knowledge. So I repented of my having landed there, remembering my companions, and what had befallen them from the apes, first and afterwards; and I sat weeping and mourning. And thereupon a man of the inhabitants of the city advanced to me, and said to me, O my master, it seemeth that thou art a stranger in this country. I therefore replied, Yes: I am a stranger, and a poor man. I was in a ship which anchored at this city, and I landed from it to divert myself in the city, and returned, but saw not the ship. — And he said, Arise and come with us, and embark in the boat; for if thou remain in the city during the night, the apes will destroy thee. So I replied, I hear and obey. I arose immediately, and embarked with the people in the boat, and they pushed it off from the land until they had propelled it from the shore of the sea to the distance of a mile. They passed the night, and I with them; and when the morning came, they returned in the boat to the city, and landed, and each of them went to his occupation. Such hath been always their custom, every night; and to every one of them who remaineth behind in the city during the night, the apes come, and they destroy him. In the day, the apes go forth from the city, and eat of the fruits in the gardens, and sleep in the mountains until the evening, when they return to the city. And this city is in the furthest parts of the country of the blacks. — Among the most wonderful of the events that happened to me in the treatment that I met with from its inhabitants, was this. A person of the party with whom I passed the night said to me, O my master, thou art a stranger in this country. Art thou skilled in any art with which thou mayest occupy thyself? — And I answered him, No, by Allah, O my brother: I am acquainted with no art, nor do I know how to make any thing. I was a merchant, a person of wealth and fortune, and I had a ship, my own property, laden with abundant wealth and goods; but it was wrecked in the sea, and all that was in it sank, and I escaped not drowning but by the permission of God; for He provided me with a piece of a plank, upon which I placed myself; and it was the means of my escape from drowning. — And upon this the man arose and brought me a cotton bag, and said to me, Take this bag, and fill it with pebbles from this city, and go forth with a party of the inhabitants. I will associate thee with them, and give them a charge respecting thee, and do thou as they shall do. Perhaps thou wilt accomplish that by means of which thou wilt be assisted to make thy voyage, and to return to thy country.

Then that man took me and led me forth from the city, and I picked up small pebbles, with which I filled that bag. And, lo, a party of men came

out from the city, and he associated me with them, giving them a charge respecting me, and saying to them, This is a stranger; so take him with you, and teach him the mode of gathering. Perhaps he may gain the means of subsistence, and ye will obtain [from God] a reward and recompense. — And they replied, We hear and obey. They welcomed me, and took me with them, and proceeded, each of them having a bag like mine, filled with pebbles; and we ceased not to pursue our way until we arrived at a wide valley, wherein were many lofty trees, which no one could climb. In that valley were also many apes, which, when they saw us, fled from us, and ascended those trees. Then the men began to pelt the apes with the stones that they had with them in the bags; upon which the apes began to pluck off the fruits of those trees, and to throw them at the men; and I looked at the fruits which the apes threw down, and, lo, they were cocoa-nuts. Therefore when I beheld the party do thus, I chose a great tree, upon which were many apes, and, advancing to it, proceeded to pelt those apes with stones; and they broke off nuts from the tree and threw them at me. So I collected them as the rest of the party did, and the stones were not exhausted from my bag until I had collected a great quantity. And when the party had ended this work, they gathered together all that was with them, and each of them carried off as many of the nuts as he could. We then returned to the city during the remainder of the day, and I went to the man, my companion, who had associated me with the party, and gave him all that I had collected, thanking him for his kindness. But he said to me, Take these and sell them, and make use of the price. And afterwards he gave me the key of a place in his house, and said to me, Put here these nuts that thou hast remaining with thee, and go forth every day with the party as thou hast done this day; and of what thou bringest, separate the bad, and sell them, and make use of their price; and the rest keep in thy possession in this place. Perhaps thou wilt accumulate of them what will aid thee to make thy voyage. — So I replied, Thy reward is due from God, whose name be exalted! I did as he told me, and continued every day to fill the bag with stones, and to go forth with the people, and do as they did. They used to commend me, one to another, and to guide me to the tree upon which was abundance of fruit; and I ceased not to lead this life for a length of time, so that I collected a great quantity of good cocoa-nuts, and I sold a great quantity, the price of which became a large sum in my possession. I bought every thing that I saw and that pleased me, my time was pleasant, and my good fortune increased throughout the whole city.

I remained in this state for some time; after which, as I was standing by the seaside, lo, a vessel arrived at that city, and cast anchor by the shore. In it were merchants, with their goods, and they proceeded to sell and buy, and to exchange their goods for cocoa-nuts and other things. So I went to my companion, informed him of the ship that had arrived, and

told him that I desired to make the voyage to my country. And he replied, It is thine to determine. I therefore bade him farewell, and thanked him for his kindness to me. Then I went to the ship, and, accosting the master, engaged with him for my passage, and embarked in that ship the cocoa-nuts and other things that I had with me, after which they set sail that same day. We continued our course from island to island and from sea to sea, and at every island at which we cast anchor I sold some of those cocoa-nuts, and exchanged; and God compensated me with more than I had before possessed and lost. We passed by an island in which are cinnamon and pepper, and some persons told us that they had seen, upon every bunch of pepper, a large leaf that shadeth it and wardeth from it the rain whenever it raineth; and when the rain ceaseth to fall upon it, the leaf turneth over from the bunch, and hangeth down by its side. From that island I took with me a large quantity of pepper and cinnamon, in exchange for cocoa-nuts. We passed also by the Island of El-'Asirát, which is that wherein is the Kamáree aloes-wood. And after that we passed by another island, the extent of which is five days' journey, and in it is the Sanfee aloes-wood, which is superior to the Kamáree; but the inhabitants of this island are worse in condition and religion than the inhabitants of the island of the Kamáree aloes-wood; for they love depravity and the drinking of wines, and know not the call to prayer, nor the act of prayer. And we came after that to the pearl-fisheries; whereupon I gave to the divers some cocoa-nuts, and said to them, Dive for my luck and lot. Accordingly they dived in the bay there, and brought up a great number of large and valuable pearls; and they said to me, O my master, by Allah, thy fortune is good! So I took up into the ship what they had brought up for me, and we proceeded, relying on the blessing of God (whose name be exalted!), and continued our voyage until we arrived at El-Basrah, where I landed, and remained a short time. I then went thence to the city of Baghdád, entered my quarter, came to my house, and saluted my family and companions, who congratulated me on my safety. I stored all the goods and commodities that I had brought with me, clothed the orphans and the widows, bestowed alms and gifts, and made presents to my family and my companions and my friends. God had compensated me with four times as much as I had lost, and I forgot what had happened to me, and the fatigue that I had suffered, by reason of the abundance of my gain and profits, and resumed my first habits of familiar intercourse and fellowship. — Such were the most wonderful things that happened to me in the course of the fifth voyage: but sup ye, and to-morrow come again, and I will relate to you the events of the sixth voyage; for it was more wonderful than this.

Then they spread the table, and the party supped; and when they had finished their supper, Sinbad of the Sea gave orders to present Sinbad the Porter with a hundred pieces of gold: so he took them and departed,

wondering at this affair. He passed the night in his abode, and when the morning came, he arose and performed the morning-prayers; after which he walked to the house of Sinbad of the Sea, went in to him, and wished him good morning; and Sinbad of the Sea ordered him to sit. He therefore sat with him, and he ceased not to converse with him until the rest of his companions came. And they conversed together, and the servants spread the table; and the party ate and drank, and enjoyed themselves and were merry. Then Sinbad of the Sea began to relate to them the story of the sixth voyage, saying to them, —

The Sixth Voyage of Sinbad of the Sea

Know, O my brothers and my friends and my companions, that when I returned from that fifth voyage, and forgot what I had suffered, by reason of sport and merriment and enjoyment and gayety, and was in a state of the utmost joy and happiness, I continued thus until I was sitting one day in exceeding delight and happiness and gayety; and while I sat, lo, a party of merchants came to me, bearing the marks of travel. And upon this I remembered the days of my return from travel, and my joy at meeting my family and companions and friends, and at entering my country; and my soul longed again for travel and commerce. So I determined to set forth. I bought for myself precious, sumptuous goods, suitable for the sea, packed up my bales, and went from the city of Baghdád to the city of El-Basrah, where I beheld a large vessel, in which were merchants and great men, and with them were precious goods. I therefore embarked my bales with them in this ship, and we departed in safety from the city of El-Basrah. We continued our voyage from place to place and from city to city, selling and buying, and diverting ourselves with viewing different countries. Fortune and the voyage were pleasant to us, and we gained our subsistence, until we were proceeding one day, and, lo, the master of the ship vociferated and called out, threw down his turban, slapped his face, plucked his beard, and fell down in the hold of the ship by reason of the violence of his grief and rage. So all the merchants and other passengers came together to him and said to him, O master, what is the matter? And he answered them, Know, O company, that we have wandered from our course, having passed forth from the sea in which we were, and entered a sea of which we know not the routes; and if God appoint not for us some means of effecting our escape from this sea, we all perish: therefore pray to God (whose name be exalted!) that He may save us from this case. Then the master arose and ascended the mast, and desired to loose the sails; but the wind became violent upon the ship, and drove her back, and her rudder broke near a lofty mountain; whereupon the master descended from the mast, and said, There is no strength nor power but in God, the High, the Great! No one is able to prevent what is

predestined! By Allah, we have fallen into a great peril, and there remaineth to us no way of safety or escape from it! — So all the passengers wept for themselves: they bade one another farewell, because of the expiration of their lives, and their hope was cut off. The vessel drove upon that mountain, and went to pieces; its planks were scattered, and all that was in it was submerged; the merchants fell into the sea, and some of them were drowned, and some caught hold upon that mountain, and landed upon it.

I was of the number of those who landed upon the mountain; and, lo, within it was a large island. By it were many vessels broken in pieces, and upon it were numerous goods, on the shore of the sea, of the things thrown up by the sea from the ships that had been wrecked, and the passengers of which had been drowned. Upon it was an abundance, that confounded the reason and the mind, of commodities and wealth that the sea cast upon its shores. I ascended to the upper part of the island, and walked about it, and I beheld in the midst of it a stream of sweet water, flowing forth from beneath the nearest part of the mountain, and entering at the furthest part of it, on the opposite side [of the valley]. Then all the other passengers went over that mountain to [the interior of] the island, and dispersed themselves about it, and their reason was confounded at that which they beheld. They became like madmen in consequence of what they saw upon the island, of commodities and wealth lying on the shore of the sea. I beheld also in the midst of the above-mentioned stream an abundance of various kinds of jewels and minerals, with jacinths and large pearls, suitable to Kings. They were like gravel in the channels of the water which flowed through the fields; and all the bed of that stream glittered by reason of the great number of minerals and other things that it contained. We likewise saw on that island an abundance of the best kind of Sanfee aloes-wood and Kamáree aloes-wood. And in that island is a gushing spring of crude ambergris, which floweth like wax over the side of that spring through the violence of the heat of the sun, and spreadeth upon the sea-shore, and the monsters of the deep come up from the sea and swallow it, and descend with it into the sea; but it becometh hot in their stomachs, therefore they eject it from their mouths into the sea, and it congealeth on the surface of the water. Upon this, its colour and its qualities become changed, and the waves cast it up on the shore of the sea: so the travellers and merchants who know it take it and sell it. But as to the crude ambergris that is not swallowed, it floweth over the side of that fountain, and congealeth upon the ground; and when the sun shineth upon it, it melteth, and from it the odour of the whole of that valley becometh like the odour of musk. Then, when the sun withdraweth from it, it congealeth again. The place wherein is this crude ambergris no one can enter: no one can gain access to it: for the mountain surroundeth that island.

We continued to wander about the island, diverting ourselves with the

view of the good things which God (whose name be exalted!) had created upon it, and perplexed at our case, and at the things that we beheld, and affected with violent fear. We had collected upon the shore of the sea a small quantity of provisions, and we used it sparingly, eating of it every day, or two days, only one meal, dreading the exhaustion of our stock, and our dying in sorrow, from the violence of hunger and fear. Each one of us that died we washed, and shrouded in some of the clothes and linen which the sea cast upon the shore of the island; and thus we did until a great number of us had died, and there remained of us but a small party, who were weakened by a colic occasioned by the sea. After this, we remained a short period, and all my associates and companions died, one after another, and each of them who died we buried. Then I was alone on that island, and there remained with me but little of the provisions, after there had been much. So I wept for myself, and said, Would that I had died before my companions, and that they had washed me and buried me! There is no strength nor power but in God, the High, the Great! — And I remained a short time longer; after which I arose and dug for myself a deep grave on the shore of the island, and said within myself, When I fall sick, and know that death hath come to me, I will lie down in this grave, and die in it, and the wind will blow the sand upon me, and cover me; so I shall become buried in it. I blamed myself for my little sense, and my going forth from my country and my city, and my voyaging to foreign countries, after what I had suffered in the first instance, and the second and the third and the fourth and the fifth; and when I had not performed one of my voyages without suffering in it horrors and distresses more troublesome and more difficult than the horrors preceding. I believed not that I could escape and save myself, and repented of undertaking sea-voyages, and of my returning to this life when I was not in want of wealth, but had abundance, so that I could not consume what I had, nor spend half of it during the rest of my life; having enough for me, and more than enough.

Then I meditated in my mind, and said, This river must have a beginning and an end, and it must have a place of egress into an inhabited country. The right plan in my opinion will be for me to construct for myself a small raft, of sufficient size for me to sit upon it, and I will go down and cast it upon this river, and depart on it. If I find safety, I am safe, and escape, by permission of God (whose name be exalted!); and if I find no way of saving myself, it will be better for me to die in this river than in this place. — And I sighed for myself. Then I arose and went and collected pieces of wood that were upon that island, of Sanfee and Kamáree aloes-wood, and bound them upon the shore of the sea with some of the ropes of the ships that had been wrecked; and I brought some straight planks, of the planks of the ships, and placed them upon those pieces of wood. I made the raft to suit the width of the river, less wide than the latter, and bound it well and firmly; and, having taken with me some of

those minerals and jewels and goods, and of the large pearls that were like gravel, as well as other things that were upon the island, and some of the crude, pure, excellent ambergris, I put them upon that raft, with all that I had collected upon the island, and took with me what remained of the provisions. I then launched the raft upon the river, made for it two pieces of wood like oars, and acted in accordance with the following saying of one of the poets: —

Depart from a place wherein is oppression, and leave the house to tell its builder's fate;
For thou wilt find, for the land that thou quittest, another; but no soul wilt thou find to replace thine own.
Grieve not on account of nocturnal calamities; since every affliction will have its end;
And he whose death is decreed to take place in one land will not die in any land but that.
Send not thy messenger on an errand of importance; for the soul hath no faithful minister save itself.

I departed upon the raft along the river, meditating upon what might be the result of my case, and proceeded to the place where the river entered beneath the mountain. I propelled the raft into that place, and became in intense darkness within it, and the raft continued to carry me in with the current to a narrow place beneath the mountain, where the sides to the raft rubbed against the sides of the channel of the river, and my head rubbed against the roof of the channel. I was unable to return thence, and I blamed myself for that which I had done, and said, If this place become narrower to the raft, it will scarcely pass through it, and it cannot return: so I shall perish in this place in sorrow, inevitably! I threw myself upon my face on the raft, on account of the narrowness of the channel of the river, and ceased not to proceed, without knowing night from day, by reason of the darkness in which I was involved beneath that mountain, together with my terror and fear for myself lest I should perish. In this state I continued my course along the river, which sometimes widened and at other times contracted; but the intensity of the darkness wearied me excessively, and slumber overcame me in consequence of the violence of my distress. So I lay upon my face on the raft, which ceased not to bear me along while I slept, and knew not whether the time was long or short.

At length I awoke, and found myself in the light; and, opening my eyes, I beheld an extensive tract, and the raft tied to the shore of an island, and around me a company of Indians and [people like] Abyssinians. When they saw that I had risen, they rose and came to me, and spoke to me in their language; but I knew not what they said, and imagined that it was a dream, and that this occurred in sleep, by reason of the violence of my distress and vexation. And when they spoke to me and I understood not their speech, and returned them not an answer, a man among them advanced to me, and said to me, in the Arabic lan-

guage, Peace be on thee, O our brother! What art thou, and whence hast thou come, and what is the cause of thy coming to this place? We are people of the sown lands, and the fields, and we came to irrigate our fields and our sown lands, and found thee asleep on the raft: so we laid hold upon it, and tied it here by us, waiting for thee to rise at thy leisure. Tell us then what is the cause of thy coming to this place. — I replied, I conjure thee by Allah, O my master, that thou bring me some food; for I am hungry; and after that, ask of me concerning what thou wilt. And thereupon he hastened, and brought me food, and I ate until I was satiated and was at ease, and my fear subsided, my satiety was abundant, and my soul returned to me. I therefore praised God (whose name be exalted!) for all that had occurred, rejoicing at my having passed forth from that river, and having come to these people; and I told them of all that had happened to me from beginning to end, and of what I had experienced upon that river, and of its narrowness. They then talked together, and said, We must take him with us and present him to our King, that he may acquaint him with what hath happened to him. Accordingly they took me with them, and conveyed with me the raft, together with all that was upon it, of riches and goods, and jewels and minerals, and ornaments of gold, and they took me in to their King, who was the King of Sarandeeb, and acquainted him with what had happened; whereupon he saluted me and welcomed me, and asked me respecting my state, and respecting the event that had happened to me. I therefore acquainted him with all my story, and what I had experienced, from first to last; and the King wondered at this narrative extremely, and congratulated me on my safety. Then I arose and took forth from the raft a quantity of the minerals and jewels, and aloes-wood and crude ambergris, and gave it to the King; and he accepted it from me, and treated me with exceeding honour, lodging me in a place in his abode. I associated with the best and the greatest of the people, who paid me great respect, and I quitted not the abode of the King.

The island of Sarandeeb is under the equinoctial line; its night being always twelve hours, and its day also twelve hours. Its length is eighty leagues; and its breadth, thirty; and it extendeth largely between a lofty mountain and a deep valley. This mountain is seen from a distance of three days, and it containeth varieties of jacinths, and different kind of minerals, and trees of all sorts of spices, and its surface is covered with emery, wherewith jewels are cut into shape: in its rivers also are diamonds, and pearls are in its valleys. I ascended to the summit of the mountain, and diverted myself with a view of its wonders, which are not to be described; and afterwards I went back to the King, and begged him to give me permission to return to my country. He gave me permission after great pressing, and bestowed upon me an abundant present from his treasuries; and he gave me a present and a sealed letter, saying to me, Convey these

to the Khaleefeh Hároon Er-Rasheed, and give him many salutations from us. So I replied, I hear and obey. Then he wrote for me a letter on skin of the kháwee, which is finer than parchment, of a yellowish colour; and the writing was in ultramarine. And the form of what he wrote to the Khaleefeh was this: — Peace be on thee, from the King of India, before whom are a thousand elephants, and on the battlements of whose palace are a thousand jewels. To proceed: we have sent to thee a trifling present: accept it then from us. Thou art to us a brother and sincere friend, and the affection for you that is in our hearts is great: therefore favour us by a reply. The present is not suited to thy dignity; but we beg of thee, O brother, to accept it graciously. And peace be on thee! — And the present was a cup of ruby, a span high, the inside of which was embellished with precious pearls; and a bed covered with the skin of the serpent that swalloweth the elephant, which skin hath spots, each like a piece of gold, and whoseover sitteth upon it never becometh diseased; and a hundred thousand mithkáls of Indian aloes-wood; and a slave-girl like the shining full-moon. Then he bade me farewell, and gave a charge respecting me to the merchants and the master of the ship.

So I departed thence and we continued our voyage from island to island and from country to country until we arrived at Baghdád, whereupon I entered my house, and met my family and my brethren; after which I took the present, with a token of service from myself for the Khaleefeh. On entering his presence, I kissed his hand, and placed before him the whole, giving him the letter; and he read it, and took the present, with which he was greatly rejoiced, and he treated me with the utmost honour. He then said to me, O Sinbad, is that true which this King hath stated in his letter? And I kissed the ground, and answered, O my lord, I witnessed in his kingdom much more than he hath mentioned in his letter. On the day of his public appearance, a throne is set for him upon a huge elephant, eleven cubits high, and he sitteth upon it, having with him his chief officers and pages and guests, standing in two ranks, on his right and on his left. At his head standeth a man having in his hand a golden javelin, and behind him a man in whose hand is a great mace of gold, at the top of which is an emerald a span in length, and of the thickness of a thumb. And when he mounteth, there mount at the same time with him a thousand horsemen clad in gold and silk; and as the King proceedeth, a man before him proclaimeth, saying, This is the King of great dignity, of high authority! And he proceedeth to repeat his praises in terms that I remember not, at the end of his panegyric saying, This is the King the owner of the crown the like of which neither Suleymán nor the Mihráj possessed! Then he is silent; and one behind him proclaimeth, saying, He will die! Again I say, He will die! Again I say, He will die! — And the other saith, Extolled be the perfection of the Living who dieth not! — Moreover, by reason of his justice and good government and intelligence,

there is no Kádee in his city; and all the people of his country distinguish the truth from falsity. — And the Khaleefeh wondered at my words, and said, How great is this King! His letter hath shewn me this; and as to the greatness of his dominion, thou hast told us what thou hast witnessed. By Allah, he hath been endowed with wisdom and dominion! — Then the Khaleefeh conferred favours upon me, and commanded me to depart to my abode. So I came to my house, and gave the legal and other alms, and continued to live in the same pleasant circumstances as at present. I forgot the arduous troubles that I had experienced, discarded from my heart the anxieties of travel, rejected from my mind distress, and betook myself to eating and drinking, and pleasures and joy.

And when Sinbad of the Sea had finished his story, every one who was present wondered at the events that had happened to him. He then ordered his treasurer to give Sinbad of the Land a hundred pieces of gold, and commanded him to depart, and to return the next day with the boon-companions, to hear his seventh story. So the porter went away happy to his abode, and on the morrow he was present with all the boon-companions; and they sat according to their usual custom, and employed themselves in eating and drinking and enjoyment until the end of the day, when Sinbad of the Sea made a sign to them that they should hear his seventh story, and said, —

The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad of the Sea

When I relinquished voyaging, and the affairs of commerce, I said within myself, What hath happened to me sufficeth me. And my time was spent in joy and pleasures. But while I was sitting one day, the door was knocked: so the door-keeper opened, and a page of the Khaleefeh entered and said, The Khaleefeh summoneth thee. I therefore went with him to his majesty, and kissed the ground before him and saluted him, whereupon he welcomed me and treated me with honour; and he said to me, O Sinbad, I have an affair for thee to perform. Wilt thou do it? — So I kissed his hand and said to him, O my lord, what affair hath the master for the slave to perform? And he answered me, I desire that thou go to the King of Sarandeeb, and convey to him our letter and our present; for he sent to us a present and a letter. And I trembled thereat and replied, By Allah the Great, O my lord, I have taken a hatred to voyaging; and when a voyage on the sea, or any other travel, is mentioned to me, my joints tremble, in consequence of what hath befallen me and what I have experienced of troubles and horrors, and I have no desire for that whatever. Moreover I have bound myself by an oath not to go forth from Baghdád. — Then I informed the Khaleefeh of all that had befallen me from first to last; and he wondered exceedingly, and said, By Allah the Great, O Sinbad, it hath not been heard from times of old

that such events have befallen any one as have befallen thee, and it is incumbent on thee that thou never mention the subject of travel. But for my sake thou wilt go this time, and convey our present and our letter to the King of Sarandeeb; and thou shalt return quickly if it be the will of God (whose name be exalted!), that we may no longer have a debt of favour and courtesy to the King. — So I replied that I heard and obeyed, being unable to oppose his command. He then gave me the present and the letter, with money for my expenses, and I kissed his hand and departed from him.

I went from Baghdád to the sea, and embarked in a ship, and we proceeded days and nights, by the aid of God (whose name be exalted!), until we arrived at the island of Sarandeeb, and with us were many merchants. As soon as we arrived, we landed at the city, and I took the present and the letter, and went in with them to the King, and kissed the ground before him. And when he saw me, he said, A friendly welcome to thee, O Sinbad! By Allah the Great, we have longed to see thee, and praise be to God who hath shewn us thy face a second time! — Then he took me by my hand, and seated me by his side, welcoming me, and treating me with familiar kindness, and he rejoiced greatly. He began to converse with me, and addressed me with courtesy, and said, What was the cause of thy coming to us, O Sinbad? So I kissed his hand, and thanked him, and answered him, O my lord, I have brought thee a present and a letter from my master the Khaleefeh Hároon Er-Rasheed. I then offered to him the present and the letter, and he read the letter, and rejoiced at it greatly. The present was a horse worth ten thousand pieces of gold, with its saddle adorned with gold set with jewels; and a book, and a sumptuous dress, and a hundred different kinds of white cloths of Egypt, and silks of Es-Suweys and El-Koofeh and Alexandria, and Greek carpets, and a hundred menns of silk and flax, and a wonderful, extraordinary cup of crystal, in the midst of which was represented the figure of a lion with a man kneeling before him and having drawn an arrow in his bow with his utmost force, and also the table of Suleymán the son of Dáood, on whom be peace! And the contents of the letter were as follows: — Peace from the King Er-Rasheed, strengthened by God (who hath given to him and to his ancestors the rank of the noble, and wide-spread glory), on the fortunate Sultán. To proceed: thy letter hath reached us, and we rejoiced at it; and we have sent the book [entitled] the Delight of the Intelligent, and the Rare Present for Friends; together with varieties of royal rarities; therefore do us the favour to accept them: and peace be on thee! — Then the King conferred upon me abundant presents, and treated me with the utmost honour; so I prayed for him, and thanked him for his beneficence; and some days after that, I begged his permission to depart; but he permitted me not save after great pressing. Thereupon I took leave of him, and went forth from his

city, with merchants and other companions, to return to my country, without any desire for travel or commerce.

We continued our voyage until we had passed many islands; but in the midst of our course over the sea, there appeared to us a number of boats, which surrounded us, and in them were men like devils, having, in their hands, swords and daggers, and equipped with coats of mail, and arms and bows. They smote us, and wounded and slew those of us who opposed them, and, having taken the ship with its contents, conveyed us to an island, where they sold us as slaves, for the smallest price. But a rich man purchased me, and took me into his house, fed me and gave me to drink, and clad me and treated me in a friendly manner. So my soul was tranquillized, and I rested a little. Then, one day, he said to me, Dost thou know any art or trade? I answered him, O my lord, I am a merchant: I know nothing but traffic. And he said, Dost thou know the art of shooting with the bow and arrow? — Yes, I answered: I know that. And thereupon he brought me a bow and arrows, and mounted me behind him upon an elephant: then he departed at the close of night, and, conveying me among some great trees, came to a lofty and firm tree, upon which he made me climb; and he gave me the bow and arrows, saying to me, Sit here now, and when the elephants come in the daytime to this place, shoot at them with the arrows: perhaps thou wilt strike one of them; and if one of them fall, come to me and inform me. He then left me and departed; and I was terrified and frightened. I remained concealed in the tree until the sun rose; when the elephants came forth wandering about among the trees, and I ceased not to discharge my arrows till I shot one of them. I therefore went in the evening to my master, and informed him; and he was delighted with me, and treated me with honour; and he went and removed the slain elephant.

In this manner I continued, every day shooting one, and my master coming and removing it, until, one day, I was sitting in the tree, concealed, and suddenly elephants innumerable came forth, and I heard the sounds of their roaring and growling, which were such that I imagined the earth trembled beneath them. They all surrounded the tree in which I was sitting, their circuit being fifty cubits, and a huge elephant, enormously great, advanced and came to the tree, and, having wound his trunk around it, pulled it up by the roots, and cast it upon the ground. I fell down senseless among the elephants, and the great elephant, approaching me, wound his trunk around me, raised me on his back, and went away with me, the other elephants accompanying. And he ceased not to proceed with me, while I was absent from the world, until he had taken me into a place, and thrown me from his back, when he departed, and the other elephants followed him. So I rested a little, and my terror subsided; and I found myself among the bones of elephants. I knew therefore that this was the burial-place of the elephants, and that that elephant had conducted me to it on account of the teeth.

I then arose, and journeyed a day and a night until I arrived at the house of my master, who saw me changed in complexion by fright and hunger. And he was rejoiced at my return, and said, By Allah, thou hast pained our heart; for I went and found the tree torn up, and I imagined that the elephants had destroyed thee. Tell me, then, how it happened with thee. — So I informed him of that which had befallen me; whereat he wondered greatly, and rejoiced; and he said to me, Dost thou know that place? I answered, Yes, O my master. And he took me, and we went out, mounted on an elephant, and proceeded until we came to that place; and when my master beheld those numerous teeth, he rejoiced greatly at the sight of them; and he carried away as much as he desired, and we returned to the house. He then treated me with increased favour, and said to me, O my son, thou hast directed us to a means of very great gain. May God then recompense thee well! Thou art freed for the sake of God, whose name be exalted! These elephants used to destroy many of us on account of [our seeking] these teeth; but God hath preserved thee from them, and thou hast profited us by these teeth to which thou hast directed us. — I replied, O my master, may God free thy neck from the fire [of Hell]! And I request of thee, O my master, that thou give me permission to depart to my country. — Yes, said he: thou shalt have that permission; but we have a fair, on the occasion of which the merchants come to us and purchase the teeth of these elephants of us. The time of the fair is now near; and when they have come to us, I will send thee with them, and will give thee what will convey thee to thy country. — So I prayed for him and thanked him; and I remained with him treated with respect and honour.

Then, some days after this, the merchants came as he had said, and bought and sold and exchanged; and when they were about to depart, my master came to me, and said, The merchants are going: therefore arise that thou mayest depart with them to thy country. Accordingly I arose, determined to go with them. They had bought a great quantity of those teeth, and packed up their loads, and embarked them in the ship; and my master sent me with them. He paid for me the money for my passage in the ship, together with all that was required of me, and gave me a large quantity of goods. And we pursued our voyage from island to island until we had crossed the sea and landed on the shore, when the merchants took forth what was with them, and sold. I also sold what I had at an excellent rate; and I purchased some of the most elegant of things suited for presents, and beautiful rarities, with every thing that I desired. I likewise bought for myself a beast to ride, and we went forth, and crossed the deserts from country to country until I arrived at Baghdád; when I went in to the Khaleefeh, and, having given the salutation, and kissed his hand, I informed him of what had happened and what had befallen me; whereupon he rejoiced at my safety, and thanked God (whose name be ex-

alted!); and he caused my story to be written in letters of gold. I then entered my house, and met my family and my brethren. — This is the end of the history of the events that happened to me during my voyages; and praise be to God, the One, the Creator, the Maker!

The Conclusion of the Story of Sinbad of the Sea and Sinbad of the Land

And when Sinbad of the Sea had finished his story, he ordered his servant to give to Sinbad of the Land a hundred pieces of gold, and said to him, How now, O my brother? Hast thou heard of the like of these afflictions and calamities and distresses, or have such troubles as have befallen me befallen any one else, or hath any one else suffered such hardships as I have suffered? Know then that these pleasures are a compensation for the toil and humiliations that I have experienced. — And upon this, Sinbad of the Land advanced, and kissed his hands, and said to him, O my lord, by Allah, thou hast undergone great horrors, and hast deserved these abundant favours: continue then, O my lord, in joy and security; for God hath removed from thee the evils of fortune; and I beg of God that He may continue to thee thy pleasures, and bless thy days. — And upon this, Sinbad of the Sea bestowed favours upon him, and made him his boon-companion; and he quitted him not by night nor by day as long as they both lived.

Praise be to God, the Mighty, the Omnipotent, the Strong, the Eminent in power, the Creator of the heaven and the earth, and of the land and the seas!

Great Britain

INTRODUCTION

AT THE very beginning of English literature we find a more or less well-developed story in the fragmentary epic poem of *Beowulf*, written by an unknown hand in the Seventh or Eighth Century of the Christian era. The surviving remnants and complete narratives of various sorts that have come down to us between the time of *Beowulf* and Malory's Arthurian romances are enough to show that both prose and verse fiction were written and read by a considerable part of the public throughout the British Isles. Among the earliest of the Celtic tales are those that were translated less than a century ago in *The Mabinogion* of Lady Guest. It is in these ancient Welsh stories that are found some of the first references to the legends of King Arthur and his knights. These were developed and expanded during the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, and formed the nucleus of a large body of stories treated by French, German, and English writers. But to the Welsh Geoffrey of Monmouth belongs the credit for having popularised the figure of Arthur as a national hero. His *Chronicle* dates from the Twelfth Century.

Sir Thomas Malory was heir to all the Arthurian "matter," and his late Fifteenth Century *Morte d'Arthur* "superseded, for all time, each and every 'French book' which went to its making."

The poets Chaucer, Gower, and Langland made notable contributions to the development of fiction, though much of their best work is more notable for its literary form than for its narrative content as fiction.

After Malory, except for the publication of *Gesta Romanorum* and a few collections of fables and short stories, there is little in the way of fiction by English writers until the later years of the Sixteenth Century. By that time the influence of Italy had begun to spread in England, where several translators and adaptors made known the stories of Boccaccio, Bandello, and several other Italians. Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* (1566–67), for example, was one of the most popular story-books of the day. The Elizabethans Greene, Lyly, Rich, Lodge and Sidney, wrote short stories, longer tales, and novels mostly in the Italian manner, though Deloney and Rich treated native themes with considerable skill. But the age of Elizabeth was an age of poetry and drama, rather than of fiction.

The Seventeenth Century saw the rise of the drama, and until the advent of Defoe there is little to record in the realm of prose fiction. Addison, Steele, and Aphra Behn were all influenced by the French novelists, and produced very little of permanent value. Congreve's one novel is an interesting exception. Not long after them, Richardson inaugurated the novel of manners, and was followed by Fielding, Sterne and Smollett. At about the same time Hawkesworth, Johnson, and Goldsmith took over the moral or philosophical tale from France. Johnson's *Rasselas* and Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* are among the best works of their kind.

The long story, or short novel, was a favorite form with the Nineteenth Century writers. The Irish writers William Carleton, Samuel Lover, Charles Lever, and Maria Edgeworth, and the Scottish novelist Sir Walter Scott, utilised the form for some of their most characteristic work. Even the great Victorians, Dickens and Thackeray, tried their hand at it, the latter with signal success.

Coming to recent times, it is impossible to do more than indicate in a sentence the remarkable development of the short novel in England. Though most of the fiction-writers of the past seventy-five years excelled in the long novel form and the short story, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy and George Meredith all wrote short novels. Among the later writers who have succeeded conspicuously in the short novel form are Stevenson, George Moore, Kipling, Galsworthy, Conrad and Maugham.

SIR THOMAS MALORY

(Flourished late 15th Century)

VERY little is known of this first outstanding writer of English prose romance. His *Morte d'Arthur*, a compilation based on the Arthurian legends, is one of the great books of English literature. It was first printed by Caxton in 1485. "Malory tinges," says Sir Edmund Gosse, "the whole English character; he is the primal fount of our passion for adventure, and of our love for active chivalry."

The following tale is taken from a reprint of the original edition, in which the spelling and punctuation have been modernised. The title in the original is *Thereafter Followeth the Book Which is of the Noble Knight Sir Galahad.*

SIR GALAHAD

AS SAITH the history that when Sir Galahad had rescued Sir Percival from the twenty knights, he rode unto a waste forest, wherein he rode many journeys, and found there many adventures which he brought to an end.

And the good knight Sir Galahad rode so long till that he came that night to the castle of Carbonek, and it befell him that he was benighted in a hermitage. And so the good man was full glad when he saw that it was a knight-errant. So when they were at rest, there came a gentlewoman knocking at the door and called Sir Galahad. And so the good man came to the door to wit what she would. Then she called the hermit Sir Ulfin; "I am a gentlewoman that would speak with the knight that is with you." Then the good man awaked Sir Galahad and bade him arise and speak with a gentlewoman, "which seemeth hath great need of you." Then Sir Galahad went to her and asked her what she would. "Sir Galahad," said she, "I will that ye arm you and mount upon your horse and follow me, for I will show you within these three days the highest adventure that ever any knight saw." Anon Sir Galahad armed him and took his horse and commended him to God, and bid the gentlewoman go, and he would follow there as she liked.

So the damsel rode as fast as her palfry might gallop till that she came to the sea that was called Collibe, and at night they came unto a castle in a valley that was closed with running water, and with high and strong

walls. And she entered into the castle with Sir Galahad, and there he had great cheer, for the lady of that castle was the damsel's lady. So when he was unarmed, the damsel said to her lady; "Madam, shall we abide here all this night?" "Nay," said she, "but till he hath dined and slept a while." So he ate and slept till that the maid called him and armed him by torchlight. And when the maid and he were both horsed, the lady took Sir Galahad a fair shield and a rich, and so they departed from the castle and rode till they came to the seaside, and there they found a ship where Sir Bors and Sir Percival were in, the which cried on the ship-board; "Sir Galahad, ye be welcome; we have abyden you long." And when he heard them he asked them what they were. "Sir," said the damsel, "leave your horse here, and I shall leave mine." And took their saddles and their bridles with them, and made a cross on them, and so entered into the ship. And the two knights received him with great joy, and every each knew other.

And so the wind arose and drove them through the sea unto a marvellous place, and within awhile it dawned. Then Sir Galahad took off his helm and his sword and asked of his fellows from whence the fair ship came? "Truly," said they, "ye wot as well as we, but of God's grace." And then they told every each to other of all their adventures, and of their great temptation.

"Truly," said Sir Galahad, "ye are much bounden to God, for ye have escaped great adventures, and had not the gentlewoman been, I had not come hither, for as for you, I weened never to have found you in this strange country." "Ah Sir Galahad," said Sir Bors, "if that Sir Launcelot your father were here, then were we well at ease, for then me seemeth we should lack nothing." "That may not be," said Sir Galahad, "but if it please our Lord."

And by then the ship went from the land of Logris, and by adventure it arrived between two rocks passing great and marvellous, but there they might not land, for there was a swallow of the sea, but there was another ship and upon it they might go without danger. "Go ye thither," said the gentlewoman, "and there shall we see adventures, for so is it our Lord's will." And when they came thither, they found the ship rich enough, but they found neither man nor woman therein, but they found in the end of the ship two fair letters written, which said a dreadful word and a marvellous: "Thou man which shall enter into this ship, beware thou be in steadfast belief, for I am faith; and therefore, beware how thou enterest, for and thou fail, I shall not help thee." "Then," said the gentlewoman, "wot ye what I am." "Certainly," said he, "not of my witting." "Wit ye well," said she, "I am thy sister, that am daughter to King Pellinore; and, therefore, wit ye well that ye are the man in the world that I most like: and, if ye be not in perfect belief of Jesu Christ, and enter not to no manner of wise, for then should ye perish in the ship, for it is so perfect

it will suffer no sin in it." And when Sir Percival knew that she was his sister, he was inwardly glad, and said, "Fair sister, I shall enter therein, for if I be a miscreature, or an untrue knight, there shall I perish."

In the meanwhile Sir Galahad blessed him and entered therein, and then next the gentlewoman, and then Sir Bors and Sir Percival. And when they were within, they found it so marvellous fair and rich, that they had great marvel thereof, and in the midst of the ship was a fair bed, and Sir Galahad went thereto, and found there a crown of silk, and at the feet was a sword, fair and rich, and it was drawn out of the scabbard half-a-foot and more, and the sword was of divers fashions, and the pommel was of stone, and there was in it all manners of colors that any man might find, and every one of the colors had divers virtues, and the scales of the haft were of two ribs of divers beasts. The one beast was a serpent, which was conversant in Calydone, and is called the serpent of the fiend. And the bone of him is of such a virtue, that there is no hand that handle it shall never be weary nor hurt. And the other beast is a fish, which is not right great, and haunteth the flood of Euphrates. And that fish is called Ertanar; and his bones be of such a manner of kind, that who that handleth them he shall have so much courage that he shall never be weary, and he shall not think on joy nor sorrow that he hath had, but only that thing which he beholdeth before him. And as for this sword, there shall never no man begripe it at the handle but one, but he shall pass all other. "In the name of God," said Sir Percival, "I shall essay to handle it." So he set his hand to the sword, but he might not begripe it. "By my faith," said he, "now have I failed." Sir Bors set his hand thereto and failed. Then Sir Galahad beheld the sword, and saw the letters as red as blood that said, "Let see who shall essay to draw me out of my scabbard, but if he be more hardier than any other, and who that draweth me, wit ye well that he shall never fail of shame of his body, or to be wounded unto the death." "By my faith," said Sir Galahad, "I would draw this sword out of the scabbard, but the offending is so great that I shall not set my hand thereto." "Now sirs," said the gentlewoman, "wit ye well that the drawing of this sword is warned unto all men, save unto you." And then beheld they the scabbard, which seemed to be of a serpent's skin, and thereon were letters of gold and silver. And the girdle was but poorly to account, and not able to sustain such a rich sword, and the letters said, "He that shall wield me ought to be more hardier than any other, if that he bear me as truly as I ought to be borne. For the body of him which I ought to hang by, he shall not be shamed in no place while he is girded with this girdle, nor never none shall be so hardy to do away this girdle, for it ought not to be done away but by the hands of a maid, and that she be a King's daughter and a Queen's, and she must be a maid all the days of her life, both in will and in deed, and if she break her virginity, she shall die the most villain-

ous death that ever did any woman." "Sir," said Sir Percival, "turn this sword, that we may see what is on the other side," and it was as red as blood, with black letters as any coal, which said, "He that shall praise me most, most shall he find me to blame at a great necessity, and to whom I shall be most debonair, shall I be most felon, and that shall be at one time."

"Sir," said she, "there was a King, that hight Pelles, the maimed King. And while he might ride, he supported much Christendom, and the holy church. So upon a day he hunted in a wood of his, which lasted unto the sea, and at the last he lost his hounds and his knights, save only one, and there he and his knight went till that they came towards Ireland, and there he found the ship. And when he saw the letters and understood them, yet he entered, for he was right perfect of his life. But his knight had no hardness to enter, and there found he this sword, and drew it out as much as ye may see. So therewithal entered a spear, wherewith he was smitten through both his thighs, and never sith might he be healed, nor nought shall before we come to him. Thus," said she, "Was not King Pelles, your grandsire, maimed for his hardiness." "In the name of God, damsel," said Sir Galahad. So they went toward the bed to behold all about it, and above the bed's head there hung two fair swords. Also there were two spindles which were as white as any snow, and there were other that were as red as any blood, and other above as green as any emerald. Of these colors were the spindles, and of natural color within, and without any painting. "These spindles," said the damsel, "were when sinful Eve came to gather fruit, for which Adam and she were put out of paradise; she took with her the bough on which the apple hung. Then perceived she that the branch was fair and green, and she remembered her of the loss that came from the tree. Then she thought to keep the branch as long as she might, and because she had no coffer to keep it in, she put it into the ground. So by the will of our Lord, the branch grew to a great tree, within a little while, and was as white as any snow, branches, boughs, and leaves, that it was a token a maid planted it. But after God came unto Adam, and bade him know his wife. So was Adam with his wife under the same tree. And anon the tree that was white became as green as any grass, and all that came of it. And in the same time was Abel begotten. Thus was the tree long of green color. And so it befell, a long time after, under the same tree Cain slew his brother Abel, whereof befell full great marvel, for anon as Abel had received the death under the green tree, it lost the green color and became red, and that was in tokening of the blood. And anon all the plants died thereof, but the tree grew, and waxed marvellous fair, and it was the fairest tree and the most delectable that any man might behold, and so died the plants that grew out of it before the time that Abel was slain under it. So long endured the tree till that Solomon, King David's son, reigned, and held the land after his

father. This Solomon was wise, and knew the virtues of stones and of trees, and so he knew the course of the stars, and many other things. This Solomon had an evil wife, where-through he weened that there had never been no good woman, and so he despised them in his books. So a voice answered him once, "Solomon, if heaviness come unto a man by a woman, yet reck thou never, for there shall come a woman, whereof there shall come greater joy unto man a hundred times more than the heaviness giveth sorrow or heaviness, and the same woman shall be born of thy lineage."

Then when King Solomon heard these words, he held himself but a fool, and the truth he perceived by old books. Also the Holy Ghost showed him the coming of the glorious Virgin Mary. Then asked he of the voice, If it should be in the line of his lineage. "Nay," said the voice, "But there shall come a man which shall be of a pure maid, and the last of your blood, and he shall be as good a knight as was Duke Josue, thy brother-in-law."

Now have I certified thee of that thou stoodest in doubt. Then was Solomon glad that there should come such a one of his lineage, but ever he marvelled and studied who that should be, and what his name might be. His wife perceived that he studied, and thought that she would know it at some season. And so she awaited her time, and asked of him the cause of his studying, and there he told her all together how the voice told him. "Well," said she, "I shall let a ship be made of the best wood, and most durable that men may find." So Solomon sent for all the best carpenters in the land. And when they had made the ship, the lady said unto Solomon, "Sir," said she, "Since it is so that this knight ought to pass all other knights of chivalry, which have been before him, and also that shall come after him, moreover I shall tell you," said she, "Ye shall go into our Lord's temple, whereas is King David's sword, your father, the which is the marvellest and the sharpest that ever was taken in any knight's hand. Therefore take that, and take ye off the pommel, and thereto make ye a pommel of precious stones, that it be so subtly made that no man perceive it, but that they be all one. And after make a hilt so marvellously and wondrously, that no man may know it, and after, make a marvellous sheath. And when you have made all this, I shall let a girdle be made thereto, such as shall please you." And this King Solomon made it as she devised, both the ship and all the remnant. And when the ship was ready in the sea for to sail, the lady let make a great bed, and marvellous rich, and set herself upon the bed's head, covered with silk, and laid the sword at the bed's feet, and the girdles were of hemp. And therewith was the King angry. "Sir, wit ye well," said she, "that I have none so high a thing that were worthy to sustain so big a sword, and a maid shall bring other knights thereto, but I wot not when it shall be, nor what time." And there she let a covering be made

to the ship of cloth, that shall never rot for no manner of weather. Yet went that lady and made a carpenter to come to that tree which Abel was slain under. "Now," said she, "carve me out of this tree as much wood as will make me a spindle." "Ah, madam," said the carpenter, "this is the tree, the which our first mother planted." "Do it," said she, "or else I shall destroy thee." Anon as the carpenter began to work, there came out drops of blood, and then would he have left, but she would not suffer him. And so he took away as much wood as might well make a spindle. And so she made him take as much of the green tree, and of the white tree. And when these three spindles were shapen, she made them to be fastened on the canopy of the bed. When Solomon saw this, he said to his wife, "Ye have done marvellously, for, though all the world were here now, they could not tell wherefore all this was made, but our Lord himself, and thou that hast done it wottest not what it shall betoken." "Now let it be," said she, "for ye shall hear tidings sooner than ye ween."

That night lay King Solomon before the ship with a small fellowship. And when King Solomon was asleep, he thought there came from heaven a great company of angels and alighted into the ship, and took water which was brought by an angel in a vessel of silver, and besprent all the ship. And after, he came to the sword, and drew letters in the hilts. And after, went to the ship-board, and wrote there other letters which said, "Thou man that wilt enter within me, beware that thou be full within of faith, for I am but faith and belief." When King Solomon espied these letters, he was sore abashed, so that he durst not enter, and so drew him back. And anon the ship was shoven into the sea, and it went so fast that he lost the sight of it within a little while. And then a little voice said, "Solomon, the last knight of thy lineage shall rest in this bed." Then went King Solomon and awaked his wife, and told her the adventures of the ship.

Now saith the history, that a great while the three fellows beheld the bed and the three spindles. Then they were of natural colors, without any manner of painting. Then they lift up a cloth which was above the ground, and there they found a rich purse by seeming. And Sir Percival took it, and found therein a writing, and so he read it, and spake of the manner of the spindles, and of the ship from whence it came, and by whom it was made. "Now," said Sir Galahad, "where shall we find the gentlewoman that shall make new girdles to the sword?" "Fair sir," said Sir Percival's sister, "Dismay you not, for by the leave of God I shall let make a girdle to the sword, such a one as shall belong thereto." And then she opened a box and took out girdles, which were seemly wrought with golden threads. And thereupon were set full of precious stones, and a rich buckle of gold. "Lo, lords," said the gentlewoman, "here is a girdle that ought to be set about the sword. And wit ye well that the greatest part of this girdle was

made of my hair, the which I loved full well while I was a woman of the world. But as soon as I wist that this adventure was ordained me, I clipped off my hair, and made this girdle in the name of God." "Ye are well found," said Sir Bors, "for truly ye have put us out of a great pain, wherein we should have entered, nor had your teaching been." Then went the gentlewoman, and set it up on the girdle of the sword. "Now," said the three fellows, "what is the right name of the sword, and what shall we call it?" "Truly," said she, "the name of the sword is, the sword with the strange girdles, and the scabbard mover of blood, for no man that hath blood in him shall never see the one part of the scabbard which was made of the tree of life." Then they said unto Sir Galahad, "In the name of Jesu Christ, we pray you that ye gird you with this sword, which hath been so much desired in the realm of Logris." "Now let me begin," said Sir Galahad, "to gripe this sword for to give you courage. But wit ye well that it belongeth no more to me than it doth to you." And then he griped about it with his fingers a great deal, and then she gird him about the middle with the sword. "Now reck I not, though I die, for now I hold me one of the blessed maidens of the world, which hath made thee now the worthiest knight of the world." "Fair damsel," said Sir Galahad, "ye have done so much, that I shall be your knight all the days of my life."

And so they came unto a castle, and passed by. So there came a knight armed, and said, "Lords, hearken what I shall say unto you. This gentlewoman that ye lead with you is a maid." "Sir," said she, "a maid I am." Then he took her by the bridle and said, "By the holy cross, ye shall not escape me, before ye have yielded the custom of the castle." "Let her go," said Sir Percival, "be ye not wise, for a maid, in what place soever she cometh, she is free." So in the meanwhile, there came out of the castle a ten or twelve knights, armed, and with them came a gentlewoman which held a dish of silver. And then, "This gentlewoman must yield us the custom of this castle." "Sir," said a knight, "What maid that passeth hereby shall give this dish full of blood of her right arm." "Blame have ye," said Sir Galahad, "that brought up such customs, and, so God me save, I ensure you, that of this gentlewoman ye shall fail as long as I live." "So God me help," said Sir Percival, "I had leaver be slain." "And I also," said Sir Bors. "By my faith," said the knight, "then shall ye die, for ye may not endure against us, though ye were the best knights of the world." Then let they run each to other, and the three fellows beat the ten knights, and then set their hands unto their swords, and beat them down, and slew them. Then there came out of the castle well a threescore knights all armed. "Fair lords," said the three fellows, "have mercy upon yourselves, and have not to do with us." "Nay, fair lords," said the knights of the castle, "we counsel you to withdraw you, for ye are the best knights of the world, and therefore, do ye no more. We will let you with this harm, but we must needs have the custom." "Certainly," said

Sir Galahad, "for nought speak ye well." Said they, "Will ye die." "We be not come thereto," said Sir Galahad. Then began they to meddle together. And Sir Galahad, with the strange girdles, drew his sword, and smote on the right hand and on the left hand, and slew whom that would abide him, and did such marvel, that there was none that saw him but that they weened he had been none earthly knight, but a monster. And his two fellows helped him passing well. And so they held their journey every each in like hard, till that it was night. Then must they needs depart. So there came a good knight, and said to the three fellows, "If ye will come in to-night, and take such harbor as here is, ye shall be right welcome, and we shall ensure you, by the faith of our bodies, as we are true knights, to leave you in such estate to-morrow as we find you, without any falsehood, and, as soon as ye know of the custom, we dare say that ye will accord thereto." "Therefore, for God's love," said the gentlewoman, "Go thither, and spare not for me." "Go we," said Sir Galahad. And so they entered into the castle, and when they were alighted, they made of them great joy. So, within a while the three knights asked the custom of the castle, and wherefore it was. "What it is," said they, "we will say you the truth."

"There is in this castle a gentlewoman, which we have, and this castle is hers and many other more. So it befell, many years ago, there fell upon her a malady. And, when she had lain a great while, she fell into a mesell, and of no leech she could have no remedy. But at the last an old man said, 'And she might have a dish full of the blood of a maid and a clean virgin in will and in work, and a king's daughter, that blood would be her health, and for to anoint her therewith.' And for this thing was this custom made." "Now," said Sir Percival's sister, "fair knights, I see well that this gentlewoman is but dead, but if she have so much of my blood." "Certainly," said Sir Galahad, "and if ye bleed so much as ye may die." "Truly," said she, "and I die for to heal her, then shall I get me great worship and soul's health, and worship unto my lineage. And better is one harm than twain. And therefore, there shall be no more battle, but to-morrow I shall yield you your custom of the castle."

And then there was great joy, more than ever there was afore, for else had there been mortal war on the morrow, notwithstanding she would none other, whether they would or not.

All that night were the three fellows eased with the best. And on the morrow, they heard mass. And Sir Percival's sister bad bring forth the sick lady. So she was brought forth before her which was full evil at ease. Then said she, "Who shall let me blood?" So anon there came one forth to let her blood. And she bled so much that the dish was full. Then she lift up her hand and blessed her. And then she said unto the lady, "Madam, I am come by my death to make you whole, for God's love pray for me." With that she fell into a swoon. Then Sir Galahad, Sir

Percival, and Sir Bors started up to her and lift her up, and staunched her blood. But she had bled so much, that she might not live. Then when she was awake, she said, "Fair brother, Sir Percival, I must die for the healing of this lady, so I require you that ye bury not me in this country, but as soon as I am dead, put me in a boat at the next haven, and let me go as adventure will lead me. And as soon as ye three come to the city of Sarras, there to achieve the Holy Grail, ye shall find me under a tower arrived, and there bury me in the spiritual place. For I say you so much, there shall Sir Galahad be buried, and ye also in the same place." So when Sir Percival understood these words, he granted it her all weeping. And then said a voice, "Lords and fellows, to-morrow at the hour of prime ye three shall depart every one from other, till the adventure bring you unto the maimed King." Then asked she her Savior, and as soon as she had received him, the soul departed from the body. So the same day was the lady healed, when she was anointed withal. Then Sir Percival made a letter of all that she had holpen them, as in strange adventures, and put it in her right hand, and so laid her in a barge, and covered it with silk. And so the wind arose, and drove the barge from the land, and all knights beheld it, till it was out of their sight. Then they drew all unto the castle, and so forthwith there fell a sudden tempest of thunder, lightning and rain, as all the earth would have broken. So half the castle turned upside down. So it passed even-song or the tempest was ceased. Then they saw before them a knight armed, and wounded hard in the body and in the head, that said, "O, Lord God succor me, for now it is need." After this knight came another knight and a dwarf, which cried to him afar: "Stand, ye may not escape." Then the wounded knight held up his hands unto God, that he should not die in such tribulation. "Truly," said Sir Galahad, "I shall succor him, for his sake that he calleth upon." "Sir," said Sir Bors, "I shall do it, for it is not for you, for he is but one knight." "Sir," said he, "I grant." So Sir Bors took his horse, and commended him to God, and rode after to rescue the wounded knight.

The story saith, that all night Sir Galahad and Sir Percival were in a chapel, in their prayers, for to save Sir Bors. So on the morrow they dressed them in their harness, toward the castle, for to wit what was betide of them therein. And, when they came there, they found neither man nor woman but that they were dead, by the vengeance of the Lord. With that they heard a voice, which said, "This vengeance is for blood shedding of maidens." Also they found, at the end of the chapel a churchyard, and therein they might see forty fair tombs. And that place was so fair, and so delectable, that it seemed them there had been no tempest, for there lay the bodies of all the dead maidens, which were martyred for the sick lady's sake. Also they found the name of every each of them, and of what blood they were come. And were all of kings blood, and twelve of them were

king's daughters. Then they departed, and went into a forest. "Now," said Sir Percival unto Sir Galahad, "we must depart, so pray we our Lord that we may meet together in short time." Then took they off their helms and kissed together, and wept at their departing.

The story saith, that when Sir Launcelot was come to the water of Morteyse, as it is rehearsed before, he was in great peril. And so he laid him down and slept, and took his adventure that God would send him. So when he was asleep, there came a vision unto him and said, "Launcelot, arise up and take thine armor and enter into the first ship that thou shalt find." And when he had heard these words he start up, and saw a great clearness about him. And then he lift up his hand, and blessed him, and so took his armor, and made him ready. And by adventure he came by a strand, and found a ship, the which was without sail and oars. And, as soon as he was within the ship, there he felt the most sweetest savor that ever he felt. And he was filled with all things that he thought on or desired. Then he said, "Fair Father Jesu Christ, I wot not in what joy I am, for this joy passeth all earthly joys that ever I was in," and so in this joy he laid him down on the ship-board and slept till daylight. And when he awoke, he found there a fair bed, and therein lying a gentlewoman dead, the which was Sir Percival's sister. And as Sir Launcelot beheld her, he espied in her right hand a writing, the which he read, wherein he found all the adventures as ye have heard before, and of what lineage she was come. So with this gentlewoman Sir Launcelot was a month and more. If ye would ask me how he lived, he that fed the people of Israel with manna in the desert in likewise fed him. For every day, when he had said his prayers, he was sustained with the grace of the Holy Ghost.

So upon a night he went to play him by the water's side, for he was somewhat weary of the ship, and then he listened, and heard a horse come, and one riding upon him. And, when he came nigh, he seemed a knight, and so he let him pass, and went there as the ship was. And there he alighted, and took the saddle and bridle, and put the horse from him, and went into the ship. And then Sir Launcelot went toward him, and said, "Sir ye be welcome." And he answered and saluted him again, and asked him his name, "For much my heart giveth unto you." "Truly," said he, "my name is Sir Launcelot du Lake." "Sir," said he, "then ye be welcome, for ye were the beginner of me in this world." "Ah," said Sir Launcelot, "Are ye Sir Galahad?" "Yea forsooth," said he. And so he kneeled down and asked him his blessing, and after took off his helm, and kissed him. And so there was great joy between them, for there is no tongue can tell the joy that they made either of other, and many a friendly word was spoken between them, as kind would, the which is no need here to be rehearsed. And there every each told other of their adventures and marvels that were befallen them in many journeys, since they departed from the court. And anon as Sir Galahad saw the gentle-

woman dead in the bed, he knew her well enough, and told great worship of her, and that she was the best maid living, and it was great pity of her death. But when Sir Launcelot heard how the marvellous sword was gotten, and who made it, and all the marvels rehearsed before, then he prayed Sir Galahad, his son, that he would show him the sword. And so he did. And anon he kissed the pommel, the hilts, and the scabbard. "Truly," said Sir Launcelot, "never till now, knew I of so high adventures done, and so marvellous and strange." So dwelled Sir Launcelot and Sir Galahad within that ship half a year, and served God daily and nightly, with all their power. And oft they arrived in isles, far from folk, where were but wild beasts. And there they found many strange adventures, and perilous, which they brought to an end. But because those adventures were with wild beasts, and not in the quest of the Sancgreal, therefore the tale maketh here no mention, for it would be long to tell that befell them.

So after upon a Monday, it befell that they arrived in the edge of a forest, before a cross of stone. And then saw they a knight armed all in white, and was richly horsed, and led in his right hand a white horse. And so he came to the ship, and saluted the two knights upon the high Lord's high behalf, and said, "Sir Galahad, ye have been long enough with your father, come out of the ship, and leap upon this horse, and ride where the adventures shall lead thee in the quest of the Sancgreal." Then he went unto his father and kissed him full courteously and said unto him, "Fair Father, I wot not when I shall see you any more, till that I see the body of our Lord Jesu Christ." "I pray you," said Sir Launcelot, "pray you unto the high Father, that he hold me in his service." And so he took his horse. And there they heard a voice that said, "Think for to do well, for the one shall never see the other till the dreadful day of doom." "Now my son Sir Galahad," said Sir Launcelot, "sith we shall depart and never see other more, I pray unto the high Father of heaven for to preserve both you and me." "Sir," said Sir Galahad, "no prayer availeth so much as yours." And therewith Sir Galahad entered into the forest. And the wind arose, and drove Sir Launcelot more than a month throughout the sea, where he slept but little, and prayed unto God that he might have a sight of the Holy Sancgreal. So it befell upon a night at midnight, he arrived afore a castle, on the back side, which was rich and fair. And there was a postern that opened toward the sea, and was open without any keeping, save two lions kept the entry, and the moon shone clear. Anon Sir Launcelot heard a voice that said, "Launcelot, go out of this ship and enter into the castle, where thou shalt see a great part of thy desire." Then he ran to his arms, and armed him. And so he went unto the gate, and saw the two lions. Then he set hands to his sword and drew it. Then came there suddenly a dwarf, that smote him upon the arm so sore, that the sword fell out of his hand. Then heard

he a voice, that said, "Oh, man of evil faith and poor belief, wherefore believest thou more in thy harness than in thy Maker, for he might more avail thee than thy armor, in whose service thou art set?" Then said Sir Launcelot, "Fair Father, Jesu Christ, I thank thee of thy great mercy, that thou reprovest me of my misdeed. Now see I well that thou holdest me for thy servant." Then took he again his sword, and put it by in his sheath, and made a cross on his forehead, and came to the lions. And they made semblant to do him harm. Notwithstanding, he passed by them without hurt, and entered into the castle, to the chief fortress, and there were they all at rest. Then Sir Launcelot entered in so armed, and he found no gate, nor door but it was opened. And so at the last, he found a chamber, whereof the door was shut, and he set his hand thereto, for to have opened it, but he might not.

Then he enforced him much for to undo the door. Then he listened, and heard a voice which sung so sweetly, that it seemed none earthly thing. And him thought that the voice said, "Joy and honor be to the Father of heaven." Then Sir Launcelot kneeled down before the chamber, for well he wist that there was the Sancgreal in that chamber. Then said he, "Fair sweet Father, Jesu Christ, if ever I did thing that pleased the Lord, for thy pity nor have me not in despite for my foul sins done here before time, and that thou show me something of that which I seek." And with that he saw the chamber-door open, and with that there came out a great clearness, that the house was as bright as though all the torches of the world had been there. So came he to the chamber door, and would have entered. And anon a voice said unto him, "Flee, Sir Launcelot, and enter not, for thou oughtest not to do it, and if thou enter thou shalt forethink it." Then he withdrew him back, and was right heavy in his mind. Then looked he up in the midst of the chamber, and saw a table of silver, and the holy vessel covered with red samite, and many angels about it, whereof one of them held a candle of wax burning, and the other held a cross, and the ornaments of the altar. And before the holy vessel he saw a good man, clothed like a priest. And it seemed that he was at the consecrating of the mass. And it seemed unto Sir Launcelot that above the priest's hands there were three men, whereof the two put the youngest, by likeness, between the priest's hands, and so he lift it up right high. And it seemed to show so to the people. And then Sir Launcelot marvelled not a little, for him thought that the priest was so greatly changed of the figure, that him seemed that he should have fallen to the ground. And when he saw none about him that would help him, then he came to the door a great pace, and said, "Fair Father, Jesu Christ, nor take it for no sin though I help the good man, which hath great need of help." Right so he entered into the chamber, and came toward the table of silver. And when he came nigh he felt a breath, that him thought was intermeddled with fire, which smote him so sore in the visage, that him

thought it all to break his visage. And therewith he fell to the ground, and had no power to arise. As he was so enraged that he had lost the power of his body, and his hearing, and his saying, then felt he many hands about him, which took him up, and bear him out of the chamber, without any amendment of his swoon, and left him there, seeming dead to all the people. So on the morrow, when it was fair daylight, they within were arisen, and found Sir Launcelot lying before the chamber-door, all they marvelled how he came in. And so they looked upon him, and felt his pulse, to wit whether there were any life in him, and so they found life in him, but he might neither stand nor stir no member that he had. And so they took him by every part of the body and bare him into a chamber, and laid him in a rich bed, far from all folk, and so he lay four days. Then the one said he was alive, and the other said nay. "In the name of God," said an old man, "for I do you verily to wit he is not dead, but he is so full of life as the mightiest of you all, and therefore I counsel you that he be well kept, till God send him life again."

In such a manner they kept Sir Launcelot twenty-four days, and as many nights, which lay still like a dead man, and at the twenty-fifth day befel him after midnight, that he opened his eyes, and when he saw folk, he made great sorrow, and said, "Why have ye wakened me, for I was better at ease than I am now? Oh, Jesu Christ, who might be so blessed, that might see openly the great marvels of secretness there where no sinner may be." "What have ye seen?" said they about him. "I have seen," said he, "so great marvels, that no tongue can tell, and more than any heart can think, and if my son had not been here before me, I had seen much more." Then they told him how he had lain there twenty-four days, and as many nights. Then him thought how it was a punishment for the twenty-four years he had been a sinner wherefore our Lord put him in penance twenty-four days and nights. Then looked Sir Launcelot before him, and saw the hair [shirt], which that he had borne nigh a year, for that he forethought him right much that he had broken his promise unto the hermit, which he had vowed to do. Then they asked him how it stood with him. "Forsooth," said he, "I am whole of my body, thanked be our Lord; therefore, sirs, for God's love, tell me where I am." Then said they all, He was in the castle of Carbonek. Therewith came a gentlewoman, and brought him a shirt of fine linen cloth, but he changed not there, but took the hair to him again. "Sir," said they, "the quest of the Sancgreal is achieved right now in you that never shall ye see more of the Sancgreal than ye have seen." "Now, I thank God," said Sir Launcelot, "of his great mercy, of that I have seen, for it sufficeth me, for as I suppose, no man in this world hath lived better than I have done, to achieve that I have done." And therewith he took the hair, and clothed him in it, and above that he put a linen shirt, and after, a robe of scarlet, fresh and new. And when he was so arrayed, they marvelled all, for they

knew that he was Sir Launcelot the good knight. And then they said all, "O Lord, Sir Launcelot be that ye?" And then he said, "Truly, I am he. Then came word to King Pelles that the knight which had lain so long dead was Sir Launcelot. Then was King Pelles wondrous glad, and went to see him. And when Sir Launcelot saw him come, he dressed him against him. And there the King made great joy of him, and there the King told him tidings that his fair daughter was dead. Then was Sir Launcelot right heavy of it, and said, "Sir, it me forethinketh your daughter, for she was a full fair lady, fresh and young, and well I wot she bare the best knight that is now on the earth, or that ever was since God was born." So King Pelles held Sir Launcelot there four days, and on the morrow he took his leave of King Pelles, and of all the fellowship that were there, and thanked them of their great labor. Right so they sat at their dinner in the chief hall, then it was so that the Sancgreal had fulfilled the table with all manner of meats, so that any heart might think. So, as they sat, they saw all the doors and windows of the place were shut without man's hand, whereof they were all abashed, and none wist what to do. And then it happened, suddenly, that a knight came unto the chief door, and knocked mightily, and cried, "Undo the door." But they would not. And ever he cried, "Undo," but they would not. And, at the last, it annoyed him so much that the King himself arose, and came to a window, where the knight called; then he said, "Sir knight, ye shall not enter at this time, while the Sancgreal is here, and therefore go into another, for certainly ye be none of the knights of the quest, but one of them that hath served the fiend, and hath left the service of our Lord." Then was he wondrous wrath at the King's words. "Sir knight," said the King, "since ye would so fain enter, tell me of what country ye be." "Sir," said he, "I am of the country and realm of Logris, and my name is Sir Ector de Marys, and brother unto the noble knight Sir Launcelot." "In the name of God," said King Pelles, "me forethinketh that I have said for your brother is here within." And when Sir Ector de Marys understood that his brother was there, for he was the man in the world that he most dread and loved, and then he said, "Ah Lord God, now doubleth my sorrow and shame. Full truly said the good man of the hill unto Sir Gawain and me of our dreams." Then went he out of the court as fast as his courser might run, and so throughout the castle.

Now saith the story that Sir Galahad rode many journeys in vain. And at the last he came unto the abbey where King Mordrains was, and when he heard that, he thought he would abide to see him. And on the morrow, when he had heard mass, Sir Galahad came unto King Mordrains, and anon the King saw him, which had lain blind a long time. And then he dressed him against him and said, "Sir Galahad, the servant of Jesu Christ whose coming I have abidden long, now embrace me, and let me rest on thy breast, so that I may rest between thine arms, for thou

art a clean virgin above all knights, as the flower of the lily, in whom virginity is signified, and thou art the rose, the which is the flower of all good virtues, and in the color of fire. For the fire of the Holy Ghost is so taken in thee that my flesh which was of dead oldness is become young again." When Sir Galahad heard his words, he embraced him in his arms. Then said King Mordrains, "Fair Lord Jesu Christ, now I have my will, now I require thee in this point that I am in, that thou come and visit me." And anon our Lord heard his prayer. Therewith the soul departed from the body. And then Sir Galahad put him in the earth as a king ought to be.

So departed he from thence. And so he rode five days, till that he came to the maimed King. And ever followed Sir Percival the five days, asking where he had been, and so one told him how the adventures of Logris were achieved. So upon a day it befell that they came out of a great forest to rest, and there they met at a travers with Sir Bors that rode alone. It is no need to tell if they were glad. And then he saluted, and they yielded him honor and good adventure, and each told other their adventures. Then said Sir Bors, "It is more than a year and a half that I never lay ten times where men dwelled, but in wild forests and in mountains, but God was ever my comfort." Then rode they a great while, till they came to the castle of Carbonek, and when they were entered within the castle, King Pelles knew them all. Then was there made great joy, for he knew well by their coming that they had fulfilled the quest of the Sancgreal. Then Eliazar, King Pelles' son, brought before them the broken sword, wherewith Joseph was smitten through the thigh. Then Sir Bors set his hand thereto, if he might have forced it again together, but it would not be. Then he took it to Sir Percival, but he had no more power thereto than he. "Now have ye it," said Sir Percival unto Sir Galahad, "for and it be ever achieved by one bodily man, ye must do it." And then took he the pieces and set them together, and they seemed that they had never been broken, and as well as it had been first forged. And then they within espied that the adventure of the sword was achieved, then they gave the sword unto Sir Bors, for it might not be better set, for he was a full good knight and a worthy man. And a little before even, the sword arose great and marvellous, and was full of great heat, that many men fell for dead. And anon alight a voice among them and said, "They that ought not to sit at the table of our Lord Jesu Christ, arise, for now shall very knights be fed." So they went thence all, save King Pelles, and Eliazar his son, the which were holy men, and a maid which was his niece. And so these three fellows and they three were there and no more. Anon they saw knights all armed come in at the hall door, and did off their helms and their harness, and said unto Sir Galahad, "Sir, we have hied sore to be with you at this table, where the holy meat shall be departed." "Then," said he, "ye be welcome, but of whence be

ye?" So three of them said they were of Gaul, and other three said they were of Ireland, and other three said they were of Denmark. So as they sate thus, there came a bed of tree out of a chamber, the which four gentlewomen brought, and in that bed lay a good man, sick, and a crown of gold upon his head, and there in the midst of the place they sat him down and went their way again. Then he lift up his head and said, "Sir Galahad, knight, ye be welcome, for much have I desired your coming, for in such pain and anguish as ye see have I been long. But now I trust to God the time is come that my pain shall be allayed, that I shall pass out of this world, so as it was promised me long ago." Therewith a voice said, "There be two among you that be not in the quest of the Sancgreal, and therefore depart ye."

Then King Pelles and his son departed. And therewith it seemed them that there came a man and four angels from heaven, clothed in the likeness of a bishop, and had a cross in his hand, and these four angels bare him up in a chair, and set him down before the table of silver, whereupon the Sancgreal was, and it seemed that he had in the midst of his forehead letters that said, "See ye here, Joseph, the first bishop of Christendom, the same which our Lord succored in the city of Sarras, in the spiritual place." Then the knights marvelled, for that bishop was dead more than three hundred years before. "O knights," said he, "marvel not for I was sometime an earthly man." With that they heard the chamber door open, and there they saw angels, and two bear candles of wax, and the third a towel, and the fourth a spear, which bled marvellously, that the drops fell within a bier, the which he held with his other hand. And they set the candles upon the table, and the third put the towel upon the vessel and the fourth set the holy spear even upright upon the vessel. And then the bishop made semblant as though he would have gone to the consecrating of the mass. And then he took a wafer, which was made in the likeness of bread, and at the lifting up there came a figure in the likeness of a child, and the visage was as red and as bright as any fire, and smote himself into that bread, so that they all saw that the bread was formed of a fleshly man. And then he put it into the holy vessel again. And then he did that belonged unto a priest to do at mass. And then he went unto Sir Galahad and kissed him. And then bade him go and kiss his fellows. And as he was bidden, so he did. "Now," said he, "ye servants of Jesu Christ, ye shall be fed before this table with sweet meats, which never no knights tasted." And when he had said, he vanished away. And they set them at the table in great dread, and made their prayers. Then looked they and saw a man come out of the holy vessel, that had all the signs of the passion of Jesu Christ, bleeding all openly, and said, "My knights and my servants, and my true children, which be come out of deadly life into spiritual life, I will now no longer hide me from you, but ye shall see now a part of my secrets and of mine hidings. Now hold and receive the

high meat which ye have so much desired." Then took he himself the holy vessel, and came to Sir Galahad, and he kneeled down, and there he received his Saviour, and so after him received all his fellows, and they thought it so sweet that it was marvel to tell. Then he said, "Galahad, son, wottest thou what I hold between my hands?" "Nay," said Sir Galahad, "but if ye tell me." "This is," said he, "the holy dish wherein I ate the lamb on Sher Thursday, and now hast thou seen that thou desired most to see, but yet hast thou not seen it so openly as thou shalt see it in the city of Sarras, in the spiritual place. Therefore thou must go hence, and bear with thee this holy vessel, for this night it shall depart from the realm of Logris, that it shall never be seen more here, and wottest thou therefore, for it is not served nor worshipped to his right, by them of this land, for they be turned unto evil living. Therefore I shall disherit them. And therefore go ye three to-morrow unto the sea, whereas ye shall find your ship ready. And with you take the sword with the strange girdles, and no more with you but Sir Percival and Sir Bors. Also I will ye take with you of the blood of this spear, for to anoint the maimed King, both his legs and all his body, and he shall have his health." "Sir," said Sir Galahad, "why shall not these other fellows go with us?" "For this cause, for right as I departed mine apostles, one here and another there, so will I that ye depart. And two of you shall die in my service, but one of you shall come again, and tell tidings." Then gave he them his blessing, and vanished away.

Then Sir Galahad went anon to the spear which lay upon the table, and touched the blood with his fingers, and came to the maimed King, and anointed his legs. And therewith he clothed him anon, and started upon his feet, out of his bed, as a whole man, and thanked our Lord that he had healed him, and that was not to the world ward. For anon he yielded him unto a place of religion of white monks, and was a full holy man. That same night about midnight, there came a voice among them, that said thus, "Mine own sons, and not my chief sons, my friends, and not my warriors, go ye hence where ye hope best to do, and as I bade you." "Ah, thanked be thou, Lord," said they, "that thou wilt vouchsafe to call us so, now may we prove that we have not lost our pain." And anon in all haste they took their harness and departed, but the three knights of Gaul, one of them hight Claudine, King Claudas' son, and the other two were great gentlemen. Then prayed Sir Galahad unto every each of them, "If ye go unto King Arthur's court, that ye will salute my lord Sir Launcelot my father, and all the fellowship of the Round Table. And pray them that if they come in those parts, that they should not forget it. "Right so departed Sir Galahad, and Sir Percival and Sir Bors with him. And so they rode three days, and then they came to a rivage, and found the ship whereof the tale speaketh before. And when they came within board, they found in the midst the table of silver which they had

left with the maimed King, and the Sancgreal, which was covered with red samite. Then they were passing glad for to have such things in their fellowship. And so they entered and made great reverence thereto, and Sir Galahad fell in his prayers long time unto our Lord, that at what time he asked he might pass out of this world. And so much he prayed, till at the last a voice said to him, "Galahad, thou shalt have thy request, and when thou askest the death of thy body, thou shalt have it, and then shalt thou find the life of thy soul." Sir Percival heard this, and prayed him of fellowship that was between them, for to tell him wherefore he asked such things. "That shall I tell you," said Sir Galahad. "The other day when we saw the part of the adventures of the Sancgreal, I was in such a joy of heart, that I trow never man was that was earthly, and therefore I wot well that when my body is dead, my soul shall be in great joy for to see the blessed Trinity every day, and the majesty of our Lord Jesu Christ." So long were they in the ship, that they said unto Sir Galahad, "Sir, in this bed ought ye to lie, for so saith the Scripture." And then he laid him down, and slept a great while, and when he awaked, he looked afore him, and saw the city of Sarras. And as they would have landed, they saw the ship wherein Sir Percival had put his sister. "Truly," said Sir Percival, "in the name of God, well hath my sister held us covenant." Then took they out of the ship the table of silver, and he took it to Sir Percival and to Sir Bors to go before, and Sir Galahad came behind. Right so they went into the city. And at the gate of the city they saw an old man sit crooked. Then Sir Galahad called him, and bade him help to bear this heavy thing. "Truly," said the old man, "it is ten years ago that I might not go but with crutches." "Care thou not," said Sir Galahad, "arise up, and show thy good will." And so he essayed and found himself as whole as ever he was. Then he ran to the table, and took one part against Sir Galahad. And anon there arose a great noise in the city that a cripple was made whole by knights marvellous that were entered into the city. Then anon after the three knights went to the water, and brought up into the palace Sir Percival's sister, and buried her as richly as a king's daughter ought to be. And when the king of the city, which was called Estourause, saw the fellowship, he asked them of whence they were, and what thing it was that they had brought upon the table of silver. And they told him the truth of the Sancgreal, and the power that God had set there. Then the king was a tyrant, and was come of the lineage of Paynims, and took them and put them in prison in a deep hole.

But as soon as they were there, our Lord sent them the Sancgreal, through whose grace they were always fulfilled while they were in prison. So at the year's end, it befell that this King Estourause lay sick and felt that he should die; then he sent for the three knights. And they came before him, and he cried them mercy of that he had done to them, and they forgave him goodly, and he died anon. When the king was dead, all

the city was dismayed, and wist not who might be their king. Right so, as they were in counsel together, there came a voice among them, and bid them choose the youngest knight of them three to be their king, "for he shall maintain you and all yours." So they made Sir Galahad king by all the assent of the whole city, and else they would have slain him. And when he was come for to behold the land, he let make about the table of silver a chest of gold and of precious stones, that covered the holy vessel, and every day in the morning the three fellows would come before it, and say their devotions.

Now, at the year's end, and the same day after that Sir Galahad had borne the crown of gold, he arose up early, and his fellows, and came unto the palace, and saw before them the holy vessel, and a man kneeling upon his knees in the likeness of a bishop, which had about him a great fellowship of angels, as it had been Jesu Christ himself. And then he arose and began a mass of our Lady. And when he came to the consecrating of the mass, and had done, anon he called Sir Galahad, and said unto him, "Come forth, the servant of Jesu Christ, and thou shalt see that which thou hast much desired to see." And then Sir Galahad began to tremble right sore when the deadly flesh began to behold the spiritual things. Then he held up both his hands toward heaven and said, "Lord, I thank thee, for now I see that which hath been my desire many a day. Now, blessed Lord, would I no longer live, if it might please thee, good Lord." And therewith the good man took our Lord's body between his hands, and proffered it unto Sir Galahad. And he received it right gladly and meekly. Now said the good man, "Wottest thou whom I am?" "Nay," said Sir Galahad. "I am Joseph of Arimathye, which our Lord hath sent here to thee to bear thee fellowship. And wottest thou wherefore he hath sent me more than any other? For thou hast resembled me in two things. One is that thou hast seen the Sancgreal. And the other is in that thou hast been a clean maiden as I am." And when he had said these words, Sir Galahad went to Sir Percival and kissed him, and commended him to God, and so he went to Sir Bors and kissed him and commended him to God. And said, "Fair lords, salute me to my lord Sir Launcelot, my father, and soon as ye see him, bid him remember this unstable world." And therewith he kneeled down before the table and made his prayers. And then suddenly his soul departed unto Jesu Christ, and a great multitude of angels bare his soul up to heaven, that his two fellows might behold it. Also his two fellows saw come from heaven a hand, but they saw not the body, and then it came right to the vessel and took it and the spear, and so bare it up to heaven. Since then was there never no man so hardy for to say that he had seen the Sancgreal.

BARNABE RICHE

(1540? – 1620)

Barnabe Riche (or Barnaby Rich, — there are several variants) was born probably about 1540, in Essex. He was a soldier in the Low Countries and wrote a novel and several tales. He probably began writing in 1574.

The most interesting of Riche's works is the collection of tales first published in London in 1581, under the title *Riche his Farewell to Militarie profession: conteining verie pleasaunt discourses fit for a peaceable tyme.*

Apolonius and Silla is a tale done in the Italian manner, and doubtless based on an Italian original. It has special interest for us, because it formed the basis of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night.*

The text used is that of the original edition, with modernised spelling and punctuation. The full title is *Of Apolonius and Silla.*

APOLONIUS AND SILLA

THERE is no child that is born into this wretched world but before it doth suck the mother's milk, it taketh first a sup of the cup of error, which maketh us, when we come to riper years, not only to enter into actions of injury, but many times to stray from that is right and reason; but in all other things, wherein we show ourselves to be most drunken with this poisoned cup, it is in our actions of love; for the lover is so estranged from that is right and wandereth so wide from the bounds of reason, that he is not able to deem white from black, good from bad, virtue from vice; but only led by the appetite of his own affections, and grounding them on the foolishness of his own fancies, will so settle his liking on such a one, as either by desert or unworthiness will merit rather to be loathed than loved.

If a question might be asked, what is the ground indeed of reasonable love, whereby the knot is knit of true and perfect friendship, I think those that be wise would answer: desert: that is, where the party beloved doth requite us with the like; for otherwise, if the bare show of beauty, or the comeliness of personage might be sufficient to confirm us in our love, those that be accustomed to go to fairs and markets might sometimes fall in love with twenty in a day. Desert must then be (of force) the ground of reasonable love; for to love them that hate us, to follow them

that fly from us, to faun on them that frown on us, to curry favor with them that disdain us, to be glad to please them that care not how they offend us, who will not confess this to be an erroneous love, neither grounded upon wit nor reason? Wherefore, right courteous gentlewomen, if it please you with patience to peruse this history following, you shall see Dame Error so play her part with a leash of lovers, a male and two females, as shall work a wonder to your wise judgment, in noting the effect of their amorous devises and conclusions of their actions: the first neglecting the love of a noble dame, young, beautiful, and fair, who only for his good will played the part of a serving-man, contented to abide any manner of pain only to behold him: he again setting his love of a dame that, despising him, (being a noble Duke,) gave herself to a serving-man (as she had thought); but it otherwise fell out, as the substance of this tale shall better describe. And because I have been something tedious in my first discourse, offending your patient ears with the hearing of a circumstance over-long, from henceforth, that which I mind to write shall be done with such celerity, as the matter that I pretend to pen may in anywise permit me; and thus followeth the history.

During the time that the famous city of Constantinople remained in the hands of Christians, amongst many other noblemen that kept their abiding in that flourishing city, there was one whose name was Apolonius, a worthy duke, who being but a very young man and even then new come to his possessions, which were very great, levied a mighty band of men at his own proper charges, with whom he served against the Turk during the space of one whole year: in which time, although it were very short, this young Duke so behaved himself, as well by prowess and valiance showed with his own hands, as otherwise by his wisdom and liberality used towards his soldiers, that all the world was filled with the fame of this noble Duke. When he had thus spent one year's service, he caused his trumpet to sound a retreat, and gathering his company together, and embarking themselves, he set sail, holding his course towards Constantinople: but, being upon the sea, by the extremity of a tempest which suddenly fell, his fleet was dissevered, some one way, and some another; but he himself recovered the Isle of Cyprus, where he was worthily received by Pontus, duke and governor of the same isle, with whom he lodged while his ships were new repairing.

This Pontus, that was lord and governor of this famous Isle, was an ancient duke, and had two children, a son and a daughter: his son was named Silvio, of whom hereafter we shall have further occasion to speak; but at this instant he was in the parts of Africa, serving in the wars.

The daughter her name was Silla, whose beauty was so peerless that she had the sovereignty amongst all other dames, as well for her beauty as for the nobleness of her birth. This Silla, having heard of the worthiness of Apolonius, this young Duke, who besides his beauty and good graces

had a certain natural allurement, that being now in his company in her father's court, she was so strangely attached with the love of Apolonius, that there was nothing might content her but his presence and sweet sight; and although she saw no manner of hope to attain to that she most desired, knowing Apolonius to be but a guest, and ready to take the benefit of the next wind and to depart into a strange country, whereby she was bereaved of all possibility ever to see him again, and therefore strived with herself to leave her fondness, but all in vain; it would not be, but, like the fowl which is once limed, the more she striveth, the faster she tieth herself. So Silla was now constrained, perforce her will, to yield to love, wherefore, from time to time, she used so great familiarity with him as her honor might well permit, and fed him with such amorous baits as the modesty of a maid could reasonably afford; which when she perceived did take but small effect, feeling herself so much outraged with the extremity of her passion, by the only countenance that she bestowed upon Apolonius, it might have been well perceived that the very eyes pleaded unto him for pity and remorse. But Apolonius, coming but lately from out the field from the chasing of his enemies, and his fury not yet thoroughly dissolved nor purged from his stomach, gave no regard to those amorous enticements which, by reason of his youth, he had not been acquainted withal. But his mind ran more to hear his pilots bring news of a merry wind to serve his turn to Constantinople, which in the end came very prosperously; and giving Duke Pontus hearty thanks for his great entertainment, taking his leave of himself and the Lady Silla his daughter, departed with his company, and with a happy gale, arrived at his desired port.

Gentlewomen, according to my promise, I will here for brevity's sake, omit to make repetition of the long and dolorous discourse recorded by Silla for this sudden departure of her Apolonius, knowing you to be as tenderly hearted as Silla herself, whereby you may the better conjecture the fury of her fever. But Silla, the further that she saw herself bereaved of all hope ever any more to see her beloved Apolonius, so much the more contagious were her passions, and made the greater speed to execute that she had premeditated in her mind, which was this. Amongst many servants that did attend upon her, there was one whose name was Pedro, who had a long time waited upon her in her chamber, whereby she was well assured of his fidelity and trust: to that Pedro therefore she bewrayed first the fervency of her love borne to Apolonius, conjuring him in the name of the goddess of love herself, and binding him by the duty that a servant ought to have, that tendereth his mistress safety and good liking, and desiring him, with tears trickling down her cheeks, that he would give his consent to aid and assist her in that she had determined, which was for that she was fully resolved to go to Constantinople, where she might again take the view of her beloved Apolonius, that he, according

to the trust she had reposed in him, would not refuse to give his consent, secretly to convey her from out her father's court, according as she should give him direction, and also to make himself partaker of her journey, and to wait upon her till she had seen the end of her determination.

Pedro, perceiving with what vehemency his lady and mistress had made request unto him, albeit he saw many perils and doubts depending in her pretence, notwithstanding, gave his consent to be at her disposition, promising her to further her with his best advice, and to be ready to obey whatsoever she would please to command him. The match being thus agreed upon, and all things prepared in a readiness for their departure, it happened there was a galley of Constantinople ready to depart, which Pedro understanding, came to the captain, desiring him to have passage for himself and for a poor maid that was his sister, which were bound to Constantinople upon certain urgent affairs: to which request the captain granted, willing him to prepare aboard with all speed, because the wind served him presently to depart.

Pedro now coming to his mistress, and telling her how he had handled the matter with the captain, she liking very well of the device, disguising herself into very simple attire, stole away from out her father's court, and came with Pedro, whom now she calleth brother, aboard the galley, where all things being in readiness, and the wind serving very well, they launched forth with their oars, and set sail. When they were at the sea, the captain of the galley, taking the view of Silla, perceiving her singular beauty, he was better pleased in beholding of her face than in taking the height either of the sun or star, and thinking her, by the homeliness of her apparel, to be but some simple maiden, calling her into his cabin, he began to break with her, after the sea fashion, desiring her to use his own cabin for her better ease, and during the time that she remained at the sea, she should not want a bed; and then, whispering softly in her ear, he said that, for want of a bedfellow, he himself would supply that room. Silla, not being acquainted with any such talk, blushed for shame, but made him no answer at all. My captain, feeling such a bickering within himself the like whereof he had never endured upon the sea, was like to be taken prisoner aboard his own ship, and forced to yield himself a captive without any cannon shot; wherefore, to salve all sores, and thinking it the readiest way to speed, he began to break with Silla in the way of marriage, telling her how happy a voyage she had made, to fall into the liking of such a one as himself was, who was able to keep and maintain her like a gentlewoman, and for her sake would likewise take her brother into his fellowship, whom he would by some means prefer in such sort, that both of them should have good cause to think themselves thrice happy, she to light of such a husband, and he to light of such a brother. But Silla, nothing pleased with these preferments, desired him to cease his talk, for that she did think herself indeed to be too unworthy such a

one as he was, neither was she minded yet to marry, and therefore desired him to fix his fancy upon some that were better worthy than herself was, and that could better like of his courtesy than she could do. The captain, seeing himself thus refused, being in a great chafe, he said as followeth:

"Then, seeing you make so little account of my courtesy, proffered to one that is so far unworthy of it, from henceforth I will use the office of my authority: you shall know that I am the captain of this ship, and have power to command and dispose of things at my pleasure; and seeing you have so scornfully rejected me to be your loyal husband, I will now take you by force, and use you at my will, and so long as it shall please me will keep you for mine own store; there shall be no man able to defend you, nor yet to persuade me from that I have determined."

Silla, with these words being struck into a great fear, did think it now too late to rue her rash attempt, determined rather to die with her own hands, than to suffer herself to be abused in such sort; therefore, she most humbly desired the captain, so much as he could, to save her credit, and seeing that she must needs be at his will and disposition, that for that present he would depart, and suffer till night, when in the dark he might take his pleasure, without any manner of suspicion to the residue of his company. The captain, thinking now the goal to be more than half won, was contented so far to satisfy her request, and departed out, leaving her alone in his cabin.

Silla, being alone by herself, drew out her knife, ready to strike herself to the heart, and, falling upon her knees, desired God to receive her soul, as an acceptable sacrifice for her follies, which she had so wilfuly committed, craving pardon for her sin and so forth, continuing a long and pitiful reconciliation to God, in the midst whereof there suddenly fell a wonderful storm, the terror whereof was such that there was no man but did think the seas would presently have swallowed them: the billows so suddenly arose with the rage of the wind, that they were all glad to fall to heaving out of water, for otherwise their feeble galley had never been able to have brooked the seas. This storm continued all that day and the next night; and they being driven to put before the wind, to keep the galley ahead the billow, were driven upon the main shore, where the galley brake all to pieces: there was every man providing to save his own life; some gat upon hatches, boards, and casks, and were driven with the waves to and fro; but the greatest number were drowned, amongst the which Pedro was one; but Silla herself being in the cabin, as you have heard, took hold of a chest that was the captain's, the which, by the only providence of God, brought her safe to the shore, the which when she had recovered, not knowing what was become of Pedro her man, she deemed that both he and all the rest had been drowned, for that she saw nobody upon the shore but herself. Wherefore, when she had a while made great lamentations, complaining her mishaps, she began in the end to comfort

herself with the hope that she had to see her Apolonius, and found such means that she brake open the chest that brought her to land, wherein she found good store of coin, and sundry suits of apparel that were the captain's. And now, to prevent a number of injuries that might be proffered to a woman that was left in her case, she determined to leave her apparel, and to sort herself into some of those suits, that, being taken for a man, she might pass through the country in the better safety: and, as she changed her apparel, she thought it likewise convenient to change her name; wherefore, not readily happening of any other, she called herself Silvio, by the name of her own brother, whom you have heard spoken of before.

In this manner she travelled to Constantinople, where she inquired out the palace of the Duke Apolonius; and thinking herself now to be both fit and able to play the serving-man, she presented herself to the Duke, craving his service. The Duke, very willing to give succor unto strangers, perceiving him to be a proper smug young man, gave him entertainment. Silla thought herself now more than satisfied for all the casualties that had happened unto her in her journey, that she might at her pleasure take but the view of the Duke Apolonius, and above the rest of his servants was very diligent and attendant upon him; the which the Duke perceiving, began likewise to grow into good liking with the diligence of his man, and therefore made him one of his chamber: who but Silvio then was most near about him, in helping of him to make him ready in a morning, in the setting of his ruffs, in the keeping of his chamber? Silvio pleased his master so well, that above all the rest of his servants about him, he had the greatest credit, and the Duke put him most in trust.

At this very instant there was remaining in the city a noble dame, a widow, whose husband was but lately deceased, one of the noblest men that were in the parts of Greece, who left his lady and wife large possessions and great livings. This lady's name was called Julina who, besides the abundance of her wealth and the greatness of her revenues, had likewise the sovereignty of all the dames of Constantinople for her beauty. To this Lady Julina Apolonius became an earnest suitor; and, according to the manner of wooers, besides fair words, sorrowful sighs, and piteous countenances, there must be sending of loving letters, chains, bracelets, brooches, rings, tablets, gems, jewels, and presents, — I know not what. So my Duke, who in the time that he remained in the Isle of Cyprus had no skill at all in the art of love, although it were more than half proffered unto him, was now become a scholar in love's school, and had already learned his first lesson; that is, to speak pitifully, to look ruthfully, to promise largely, to serve diligently, and to please carefully: now he was learning his second lesson; that is, to reward liberally, to give bountifully, to present willingly, and to write lovingly. Thus Apolonius was so busied in his new study, that I warrant you there was no man

that could challenge him for playing the truant, he followed his profession with so good a will: and who must be the messenger to carry the tokens and love-letters to the Lady Julina, but Silvio, his man? In him the Duke reposed his only confidence to go between him and his lady.

Now, gentlewomen, do you think there could have been a greater torment devised, wherewith to afflict the heart of Silla, than herself to be made the instrument to work her own mishap, and to play the attorney in a cause that made so much against herself? But Silla, altogether desirous to please her master, cared nothing at all to offend herself, followed his business with so good a will, as if it had been in her own preferment.

Julina, now having many times taken the gaze of this young youth, Silvio, perceiving him to be of such excellent perfect grace, was so entangled with the often sight of this sweet temptation, that she fell into as great a liking with the man, as the master was with herself; and on a time, Silvio being sent from his master with a message to the Lady Julina, as he began very earnestly to solicit in his master's behalf, Julina, interrupting him in his tale, said: "Silvio, it is enough that you have said for your master; from henceforth, either speak for yourself, or say nothing at all." Silla, abashed to hear these words, began in her mind to accuse the blindness of Love, that Julina, neglecting the good will of so noble a Duke, would prefer her love unto such a one, as nature itself had denied to recompense her liking.

And now, for a time leaving matters depending as you have heard, it fell out that the right Silvio indeed, (whom you have heard spoken of before; the brother of Silla,) was come to his father's court into the Isle of Cyprus; where, understanding that his sister was departed in manner as you have heard, conjectured that the very occasion did proceed of some liking had between Pedro her man (that was missing with her) and herself: but Silvio, who loved his sister as dearly as his own life, and the rather for that as she was his natural sister, both by father and mother, so the one of them was so like the other in countenance and favor, that there was no man able to discern the one from the other by their faces, saving by their apparel, the one being a man, the other a woman.

Silvio, therefore, vowed to his father, not only to seek out his sister Silla, but also to revenge the villain which he conceived in Pedro for the carrying away of his sister; and thus departing, having travelled through many cities and towns without hearing any manner of news of those he went to seek for, at the last he arrived at Constantinople, where as he was walking in an evening for his own recreation, on a pleasant green yard without the walls of the city, he fortuned to meet with the Lady Julina, who likewise had been abroad to take the air; and as she suddenly cast her eyes upon Silvio, thinking him to be her old acquaintance by reason they were so like one another, as you have heard before, said unto him; "Sir Silvio, if your haste be not the greater, I pray you, let me have a little talk with you, seeing I have so luckily met you in this place."

Silvio, wondering to hear himself so rightly named, being but a stranger, not of above two days' continuance in the city, very courteously came towards her, desirous to hear what she would say.

Julina, commanding her train something to stand back, said as followeth: "Seeing my good will and friendly love hath been the only cause to make me so prodigal to offer that I see is so lightly rejected, it maketh me to think that men be of this condition, rather to desire those things which they cannot come by, than to esteem or value of that which both largely and liberally is offered unto them: but if the liberality of my proffer hath made to seem less the value of the thing that I meant to present, it is but in your own conceit, considering how many noble men there hath been here before, and be yet at this present, which hath both served, sued, and most humbly entreated, to attain to that which to you of myself I have freely offered and I perceive is despised, or at the least very lightly regarded."

Silvio, wondering at these words, but more amazed that she could so rightly call him by his name, could not tell what to make of her speeches, assuring himself that she was deceived and did mistake him, did think, notwithstanding, it had been a point of great simplicity if he should forsake that which Fortune had so favorably proffered unto him, perceiving by her train that she was some lady of great honor, and viewing the perfection of her beauty and the excellency of her grace and countenance, did think it impossible that she should be despised, and therefore answered thus:

"Madam, if before this time I have seemed to forget myself in neglecting your courtesy which so liberally you have meant unto me, please it you to pardon what is past, and from this day foreward Silvio remaineth ready prest to make such reasonable amends as his ability may anyways permit, or as it shall please you to command."

Julina, the gladdest woman that might be to hear these joyful news, said: "Then, my Silvio, see you fail not to-morrow at night to sup with me at my own house, where I will discourse farther with you what amends you shall make me." To which request Silvio gave his glad consent, and thus they departed, very well pleased. And as Julina did think the time very long till she had reaped the fruit of her desire, so Silvio he wished for harvest before corn could grow, thinking the time as long till he saw how matters would fall out; but, not knowing what lady she might be, he presently (before Julina was out of sight) demanded of one that was walking by, what she was, and how she was called? who satisfied Silvio in every point, and also in what part of the town her house did stand, whereby he might enquire it out.

Silvio, thus departing to his lodging, passed the night with very unquiet sleeps, and the next morning his mind ran so much of his supper, that he never cared neither for his breakfast nor dinner; and the day, to his seem-

ing, passed away so slowly, that he had thought the stately steeds had been tired that draw the chariot of the sun, or else some other Joshua had commanded them again to stand, and wished that Phaeton had been there with a whip.

Julina, on the other side, she had thought the clock-setter had played the knave, the day came no faster forwards: but six o'clock being once struck, recovered comfort to both parties; and Silvio, hastening himself to the palace of Julina, where by her he was friendly welcomed, and a sumptuous supper being made ready, furnished with sundry sorts of delicate dishes, they sat them down, passing the supper time with amorous looks, loving countenances, and secret glances conveyed from the one to the other, which did better satisfy them than the feeding of their dainty dishes.

Supper time being thus spent, Julina did think it very unfitly if she should turn Silvio to go seek his lodging in an evening, desired him therefore that he would take a bed in her house for that night; and, bringing him up into a fair chamber that was very richly furnished, she found such means, that when all the rest of her household servants were a-bed and quiet, she came herself to bear Silvio company, where, concluding upon conditions that were in question between them, they passed the night . . . but the morning approaching, Julina took her leave, and conveyed herself into her own chamber; and when it was fair daylight, Silvio, making himself ready, departed likewise about his affairs in the town, debating with himself how things had happened, being well assured that Julina had mistaken him; and, therefore, for fear of further evils, determined to come no more there, but took his journey towards other places in the parts of Greece, to see if he could learn any tidings of his sister Silla.

The Duke Apolonius, having made a long suit and never a whit the nearer of his purpose, came to Julina to crave her direct answer, either to accept of him and of such conditions as he proffered unto her, or else to give him his last farewell.

Julina, as you have heard, had taken an earnest penny of another, whom she had thought had been Silvio the Duke's man; was at a controversy in herself what she might do: one while she thought, seeing her her occasion served so fit, to crave the Duke's good will, for the marrying of his man; then again, she could not tell what displeasure the Duke would conceive, in that she should seem to prefer his man before himself, did think it therefore best to conceal the matter till she might speak with Silvio, to use his opinion how these matters should be handled: and hereupon resolving herself, desiring the Duke to pardon her speeches, said as followeth:

"Sir Duke, for that from this time forwards I am no longer of myself, having given my full power and authority over to another whose wife I

now remain by faithful vow and promise; and albeit I know the world will wonder when they shall understand the fondness of my choice, yet I trust you yourself with nothing dislike with me, sith I have meant no other thing than the satisfying of mine own contentation and liking."

The Duke, hearing these words, answered: "Madam, I must then content myself, although against my will, having the law in your own hands to like of whom you list, and to make choice where it pleaseth you."

Julina, giving the Duke great thanks, that would content himself with such patience, desired him likewise to give his free consent, and good will to the party whom she had chosen to be her husband.

"Nay, surely, madam, ([quoth] the Duke) I will never give my consent that any other man shall enjoy you than myself: I have made too great account of you, than so lightly to pass you away with my good will. But seeing it lieth not in me to let you, having (as you say) made your own choice, so from henceforward I leave you to your own liking, always willing you well, and thus will take my leave."

The Duke departed towards his own house, very sorrowful that Julina had thus served him: but in the mean space that the Duke had remained in the house of Julina, some of his servants fell into talk and conference with the servants of Julina; where, debating between them of the likelihood of the marriage between the Duke and the lady, one of the servants of Julina said that he never saw his lady and mistress use so good countenance to the Duke himself, as she had done to Silvio his man; and began to report with what familiarity and courtesy she had received him, feasted him, and lodged him, and that, in his opinion, Silvio was like to speed before the Duke, or any other that were suitors.

This tale was quickly brought to the Duke himself, who, making better inquiry in the matter, found it to be true that was reported; and, better considering of the words which Julina had used towards himself, was very well assured that it could be no other than his own man that had thrust his nose so far out of joint: wherefore, without any further respect, caused him to be thrust into a dungeon, where he was kept prisoner in a very pitiful plight.

Poor Silvio, having got intelligence by some of his fellows what was the cause that the Duke his master did bear such displeasure unto him, devised all the means he could, as well by mediation by his fellows, as otherwise by petitions and supplications to the Duke, that he would suspend his judgment till perfect proof were had in the matter, and then, if any manner of thing did fall out against him, whereby the Duke had cause to take any grief, he would confess himself worthy not only of imprisonment, but also of most vile and shameful death. With these petitions he daily plied the Duke, but all in vain; for the Duke thought he had made so good proof that he was thoroughly confirmed in his opinion against his man.

But the Lady Julina, wondering what made Silvio that he was so slack in his visitation, and why he absented himself so long from her presence, began to think that all was not well; but in the end, perceiving no decoction of her former surfeit, received as you have heard, and . . . assuring herself to be with child, fearing to become quite bankrupt of her honor, did think it more than time to seek out a father, and made such secret search and diligent inquiry, that she learned the truth, how Silvio was kept in prison by the Duke his master; and minding to find a present remedy, as well for the love she bare to Silvio as for the maintenance of her credit and estimation, she speedily hasted to the palace of the Duke, to whom she said as followeth:

"Sir Duke, it may be that you will think my coming to your house in this sort doth something pass the limits of modesty, the which I protest, before God, proceedeth of this desire, that the world should know how justly I seek means to maintain my honor. But to the end I seem not tedious with prolixity of words, nor to use other than direct circumstances, know, sir, that the love I bear to my only beloved Silvio, whom I do esteem more than all the jewels in the world, whose personage I regard more than my own life, is the only cause of my attempted journey, beseeching you, that all the whole displeasure which I understand you have conceived against him, may be imputed unto my charge, and that it would please you lovingly to deal with him, whom of myself I have chosen, rather for the satisfaction of mine honest liking, than for the vain preëminences or honorable dignities looked after by ambitious minds."

The Duke, having heard this discourse, caused Silvio presently to be sent for, and to be brought before him, to whom he said: "Had it not been sufficient for thee, when I had reposed myself in thy fidelity and the trustiness of thy service, that thou shouldst so traitorously deal with me, but since that time hast not spared still to abuse me with so many forgeries and perjured protestations, not only hateful unto me, whose simplicity thou thinkest to be such, that by the plot of thy pleasant tongue thou wouldst make me believe a manifest untruth; but most abominable be thy doings in the presence and sight of God, that hast not spared to blaspheme his holy name by calling him to be a witness to maintain thy leasings, and so detestably wouldst forswear thyself in a matter that is so openly known."

Poor Silvio, whose innocence was such that he might lawfully swear, seeing Julina to be there in place, answered thus:

"Most noble Duke, well understanding your conceived grief, most humbly I beseech you patiently to hear my excuse, not minding thereby to aggravate or heap up your wrath and displeasure, protesting, before God, that there is nothing in the world which I regard so much, or do esteem so dear, as your good grace and favor; but desirous that Your Grace should know my innocence, and to clear myself of such impositions,

wherewith I know I am wrongfully accused, which, as I understand, should be in the practising of the Lady Julina, who standeth here in place, whose acquittance for my better discharge now I most humbly crave, protesting, before the Almighty God, that neither in thought, word, nor deed, I have not otherwise used myself than according to the bond and duty of a servant, that is both willing and desirous to further his master's suites; which if I have otherwise said than that is true, you, Madam Julina, who can very well decide the depths of all this doubt, I most humbly beseech you to certify a truth, if I have in any thing missaid, or have otherwise spoken than is right and just."

Julina, having heard this discourse which Silvio had made, perceiving that he stood in great awe of the Duke's displeasure, answered thus: "Think not, my Silvio, that my coming hither is to accuse you of any misdemeanor towards your master, so I do not deny but in all such embassies wherein towards me you have been employed, you have used the office of a faithful and trusty messenger, neither am I ashamed to confess that the first day that mine eyes did behold the singular behavior, the notable courtesy, and other innumerable gifts wherewith my Silvio is endued, but that beyond all measure my heart was so inflamed that impossible it was for me to quench the fervent love, or extinguish the least part of my conceived torment, before I had bewrayed the same unto him, and of my own motion craved his promised faith and loyalty of marriage; and now is the time to manifest the same unto the world which hath been done before God and between ourselves, knowing that it is not needful to keep secret that which is neither evil done nor hurtful to any person. Therefore (as I said before) Silvio is my husband by plighted faith, whom I hope to obtain without offence or displeasure of any one, trusting that there is no man that will so far forget himself as to restrain that which God hath left at liberty for every wight, or that will seek by cruelty to force ladies to marry otherwise than according to their own liking. Fear not then, my Silvio, to keep your faith and promise, which you have made unto me; and as for the rest, I doubt not things will so fall out as you shall have no manner of cause to complain."

Silvio, amazed to hear these words, for that Julina by her speech seemed to confirm that which he most of all desired to be quit of, said: "Who would have thought that a lady of so great honor and reputation would herself be the ambassador of a thing so prejudicial and uncomely for her estate! What plighted promises be these which be spoken of? altogether ignorant unto me, which if it be otherwise than I have said, you sacred goddess, consume me straight with flashing flames of fire. But what words might I use to give credit to the truth and innocence of my cause? Ah, Madame Julina! I desire no other testimony than your own; I desire no other testimony than your own honesty and virtue, thinking that you will not so much blemish the brightness of your honor, knowing

that a woman is, or should be, the image of courtesy, continence, and shamefastness, from the which so soon as she stoopeth, and leaveth the office of her duty and modesty, besides the degraduation of her honor, she thrusteth herself into the pit of perpetual infamy. And as I can not think you would so far forget yourself by the refusal of a noble Duke, to dim the light of your renown and glory which hitherto you have maintained amongst the best and noblest ladies, by such a one as I know myself to be, too far unworthy your degree and calling, so most humbly I beseech you to confess a truth, whereto tendeth those vows and promises you speak of, which speeches be so obscure unto me, as I know not for my life how I might understand them."

Julina, something nipped with these speeches, said: "And what is the matter, that now you make so little account of your Julina, that, being my husband indeed, have the face to deny me to whom thou art contracted by so many solemn oaths? What! art thou ashamed to have me to thy wife? How much oughtest thou rather to be ashamed to break thy promised faith, and to have despised the holy and dreadful name of God? but that time constraineth me to lay open that which shame rather willeth I should dissemble and keep secret, behold me then here, Silvio, whom thou hast gotten with child; who, if thou be of such honesty as I trust for all this I shall find, then the thing is done without prejudice, or any hurt to my conscience, considering that by the professed faith thou didst account me for thy wife, and I received thee for my spouse and loyal husband, swearing by the Almighty God that no other than you have made the conquest and triumph of my chastity, whereof I crave no other witness then yourself and mine own conscience. . . ."

But now to return to our Silvio who, hearing an oath sworn so divinely that he had gotten a woman with child, was like to believe that it had been true in very deed; but, remembering his own impediment, thought it impossible that he should commit such an act, and therefore, half in a chafe, he said: "What law is able to restrain the foolish indiscretion of a woman that yieldeth herself to her own desires? What shame is able to bridle or withdraw her from her mind and madness, or with what snaffle is it possible to hold her back from the execution of her filthiness? But what abomination is this, that a lady of such a house should so forget the greatness of her estate, the alliance whereof she is descended, the nobility of her deceased husband, and maketh no conscience to shame and slander herself with such a one as I am, being so far unfit and unseemly for her degree! But how horrible is it to hear the name of God so defaced, that we make no more account but for the maintenance of our mischiefs, we fear no whit at all to forswear his holy name, as though he were not in all his dealings most righteous, true, and just, and will not only lay open our leasings to the world, but will likewise punish the same with most sharp and bitter scourges."

Julina, not able to endure him to proceed any farther in his sermon, was already surprised with a vehement grief, began bitterly to cry out, uttering these speeches following:

"Alas! Is it possible that the sovereign justice of God can abide a mischief so great and cursed? Why may I not now suffer death, rather than the infamy which I see to wander before mine eyes? Oh, happy, and more than right happy, had I been, if inconstant fortune had not devised this treason, wherein I am surprised and caught! Am I thus become to be entangled with snares, and in the hands of him who, enjoying the spoils of my honor, will openly deprive me of my fame, by making me a common fable to all posterity in time to come? Ah, traitor, and discourteous wretch! Is this the recompense of the honest and firm amity which I have borne thee? Wherein have I deserved this discourtesy? By loving thee more than thou art able to deserve? Is it I, arrant thief! is it I, upon whom thou thinkest to work thy mischiefs? Dost thou think me no better worth but that thou mayest prodigally waste my honor at thy pleasure? Didst thou dare to adventure upon me, having thy conscience wounded with so deadly a treason? Ah, unhappy, and, above all other, most unhappy! that have so charily preserved mine honor, and now am made a prey to satisfy a young man's lust, that hath coveted nothing but the spoil of my chastity and good name!"

Here withal her tears so gushed down her cheeks, that she was not able to open her mouth to use any farther speech.

The Duke, who stood by all this while and heard this whole discourse, was wonderfully moved with compassion towards Julina, knowing that from her infancy she had ever so honorably used herself, that there was no man able to detect her of any misdemeanor, otherwise than beseemed a lady of her estate: wherefore, being fully resolved that Silvio, his man, had committed this villainy against her, in a great fury drawing his rapier, he said unto Silvio:

"How canst thou, arrant thief! show thyself so cruel and careless to such as do thee honor? Hast thou so little regard of such a noble lady, as humbleth herself to such a villain as thou art, who, without any respect either of her renown or noble estate, canst be content to seek the wrack and utter ruin of her honor? But frame thyself to make such satisfaction as she requireth, although I know, unworthy wretch, that thou art not able to make her the least part of amends, or I swear by God that thou shalt not escape the death which I will minister thee with my own hands, and therefore advise thee well what thou doest."

Silvio, having heard this sharp sentence, fell down on his knees before the Duke, craving for mercy, desiring that he might be suffered to speak with the Lady Julina apart, promising to satisfy her according to her own contentation.

"Well, ([quoth] the Duke) I take thy word; and therewithal I advise

thee that thou perform thy promise, or otherwise I protest, before God, I will make thee such an example to the world, that all traitors shall tremble for fear how they do seek the dishonoring of ladies."

But now Julina had conceived so great grief against Silvio, that there was much ado to persuade her to talk with him; but remembering her own case, desirous to hear what excuse he could make in the end she agreed, and being brought into a place severally by themselves, Silvio began with a piteous voice to say as followeth:

"I know not, madam, of whom I might make complaint, whether of you or of myself, or rather of Fortune, which hath conducted and brought us both into so great adversity, I see that you receive great wrong, and I am condemned against all right; you in peril to abide the brute of spiteful tongues, and I in danger to lose the thing that I most desire; and although I could allege many reasons to prove my sayings true, yet I refer myself to the experience and bounty of your mind." And herewithal loosing his garment and showed Julina his breasts surmounting far the whiteness of snow itself, saying: "Lo, Madam! behold here the party whom you have challenged to be the father of your child. See, I am a woman, the daughter of a noble Duke, who, only for the love of him whom you so lightly have shaken off, have forsaken my father, abandoned my country, and, in manner as you see, am become a serving-man, satisfying myself but with the only sight of my Apolonius. And now, Madam, if my passion were not vehement, and my torments without comparison, I would wish that my feigned griefs might be laughed to scorn, and my dissembled pains to be rewarded with flouts: but my love being pure, my travail continual, and my griefs endless, I trust, madam, you will not only excuse me of crime, but also pity my distress, the which, I protest, I would still have kept secret, if my fortune would so have permitted."

Julina did now think herself to be in a worse case then ever she was before, for now she knew not whom to challenge to be the father of her child; wherefore, when she had told the Duke the very certainty of the discourse which Silvio had made unto her, she departed to her own house, with such grief and sorrow that she purposed never to come out of her own doors again alive, to be a wonder and mocking-stock to the world.

But the Duke, more amazed to hear this strange discourse of Silvio, came unto him, whom when he had viewed with better consideration, perceived indeed that it was Silla, the daughter of Duke Pontus, and embracing her in his arms, he said:

"Oh, the branch of all virtue and the flower of courtesy itself! Pardon me, I beseech you, of all such discourtesies as I have ignorantly committed towards you, desiring you that without further memory of ancient griefs, you will accept of me, who is more joyful and better contented with your presence, than if the whole world were at my commandment. Where hath there ever been found such liberality in a lover, which having been

trained up and nourished amongst the delicacies and banquets of the court, accompanied with trains of many fair and noble ladies, living in pleasure and in the midst of delights, would so prodigally adventure yourself, neither fearing mishaps, nor misliking to take such pains as I know you have not been accustomed unto? Oh, liberality never heard of before! Oh, fact that can never be sufficiently rewarded! Oh, true love most pure and unfeigned!" Here withal sending for the most artificial workmen, he provided for her sundry suits of sumptuous apparel, and the marriage day appointed, which was celebrated with great triumph through the whole city of Constantinople, everyone praising the nobleness of the Duke; but so many as did behold the excellent beauty of Silla gave her the praise above all the rest of the ladies in the troupe.

The matter seemed so wonderful and strange, that the bruit was spread throughout all the parts of Grecia, in so much that it came to the hearing of Silvio; who, as you have heard, remained in those parts to inquire of his sister: he being the gladdest man in the world, hasted to Constantinople, where, coming to his sister, he was joyfully received, and most lovingly welcomed, and entertained of the Duke his brother-in-law. After he had remained there two or three days, the Duke revealed unto Silvio the whole discourse, how it happened between his sister and the Lady Julina, and how his sister was challenged for getting a woman with child. Silvio, blushing with these words, was stricken with great remorse to make Julina amends, understanding her to be a noble lady, and was left defamed to the world through his default: he therefore bewrayed the whole circumstance to the Duke, whereof the Duke being very joyful, immediately repaired with Silvio to the house of Julina, whom they found in her chamber in great lamentation and mourning. To whom the Duke said: "Take courage, madam, for behold here a gentleman that will not stick both to father your child and to take you for his wife; no inferior person, but the son and heir of a noble Duke, worthy of your estate and dignity."

Julina, seeing Silvio in place, did know very well that he was the father of her child, and was so ravished with joy, that she knew not whether she were awake, or in some dream. Silvio, embracing her in his arms, craving forgiveness of all that was past, concluded with her the marriage day, which was presently accomplished with great joy and contentation to all parties. And thus, Silvio having attained a noble wife, and Silla, his sister, her desired husband, they passed the residue of their days with such delight as those that have accomplished the perfection of their felicities.

WILLIAM CONGREVE

(1670–1729)

CONGREVE is known as one of the great English writers of comedy. As a writer of fiction his claim on our consideration rests entirely upon the little-known novel *Incognita*. He was born in Yorkshire, but spent his early years in Ireland. After graduating from Trinity College, Dublin, he returned to England in 1688. His first play was produced in London in 1693. *Love for Love* (1695), and *The Way of the World* (1700), were his most brilliant and famous comedies. The last twenty-seven years of his life were spent in affluence, but were almost barren of literary productions.

Congreve's only novel was first published in a magazine in 1691, and for a time enjoyed a certain popularity. *Incognita* is a clever and brilliant example of a type of fiction that was practised by several writers of the time.

The present version is a reprint (with modernised spelling and punctuation) of the edition of 1692. The full title reads, *Incognita: or, Love and Duty Reconcil'd. A Novel.*

INCOGNITA

AURELIAN was the only son to a principal gentleman of Florence. The indulgence of his father prompted, and his wealth enabled him, to bestow a generous education upon him whom he now began to look upon as the type of himself; an impression he had made in the gaiety and vigor of his youth, before the rust of age had debilitated and obscured the splendor of the original. He was sensible that he ought not to be sparing in the adornment of him, if he had resolution to beautify his own memory. Indeed, Don Fabio (for so was the old gentleman called) has been observed to have fixed his eyes upon Aurelian, when much company has been at table, and have wept through earnestness of intention, if nothing happened to divert the object; whether it were for regret at the recollection of his former self, or for the joy he conceived in being, as it were, revived in the person of his son, I never took upon me to enquire, but supposed it might be sometimes one, and sometimes both together.

Aurelian, at the age of eighteen years, wanted nothing but a beard that the most accomplished Cavalier in Florence could pretend to: he had been educated from twelve years old at Siena, where it seems his father kept a receiver, having a large income from the rents of several houses in that town. Don Fabio gave his servant orders, that Aurelian should not

be stinted in his expenses, when he came up to years of discretion. By which means he was enabled not only to keep company with, but also to confer many obligations upon strangers of quality, and gentlemen who travelled from other countries into Italy, of which Siena never wanted store, being a town most delightfully situate, upon a noble hill, and very well suiting with strangers at first, by reason of the agreeableness and purity of the air. There also is the quaintness and delicacy of the Italian tongue most likely to be learned, there being many public professors of it in that place; and indeed the very vulgar of Siena do express themselves with an easiness and sweetness surprising, and even grateful to their ears who understand not the language.

Here Aurelian contracted an acquaintance with persons of worth of several countries, but among the rest an intimacy with a gentleman of quality of Spain, and nephew to the Archbishop of Toledo, who had so wrought himself into the affections of Aurelian, through a conformity of temper, an equality in years, and something of resemblance in feature and proportion, that he looked upon him as his second self. Hippolito, on the other hand, was not ungrateful in return of friendship, but thought himself either alone or in ill company, if Aurelian were absent: but his Uncle having sent him to travel, under the conduct of a governor, and the two years which limited his stay at Siena being expired, he was put in mind of his departure.

His friend grew melancholy at the news, but considering that Hippolito had never seen Florence, he easily prevailed with him to make his first journey thither, whither he would accompany him, and perhaps prevail with his father to do the like throughout his travels.

They accordingly set out, but not being able easily to reach Florence the same night, they rested a league or two short, at a villa of the great Duke's called Poggio Imperiale, where they were informed by some of his Highness's servants, that the nuptials of Donna Catharina (near kinswoman to the great Duke) and Don Ferdinand de Rovori, were to be solemnized the next day, and that extraordinary preparations had been making for some time past, to illustrate the solemnity with balls and masques, and other divertisements; that a tilting had been proclaimed, and to that purpose scaffolds erected around the spacious court, before the Church di Santa Croce, where were usually seen all cavalcades and shows, performed by assemblies of the young nobility: that all mechanics and tradesmen were forbidden to work or expose any goods to sale for the space of three days; during which time all persons should be entertained at the Great Duke's cost; and public provision was to be made for the setting forth and furnishing a multitude of tables, with entertainment for all comers and goers, and several houses appointed for that use in all streets.

This account alarmed the spirits of our young travellers, and they were

overjoyed at the prospect of pleasures they foresaw. Aurelian could not contain the satisfaction he conceived in the welcome fortune had prepared for his dear Hippolito. In short, they both remembered so much of the pleasing relation had been made them, that they forgot to sleep, and were up as soon as it was light, pounding at poor Signior Claudio's door (so was Hippolito's governor called) to rouse him, that no time might be lost till they were arrived at Florence, where they would furnish themselves with disguises and other accoutrements necessary for the prosecution of their design of sharing in the public merriment; the rather were they for going so early because Aurelian did not think fit to publish his being in town for a time, lest his father knowing of it, might give some restraint to that loose they designed themselves.

Before sunrise they entered Florence at Porta Romana, attended only by two servants, the rest being left behind to avoid notice; but, alas! they needed not to have used half that caution; for early as it was, the streets were crowded with all sorts of people passing to and fro, and every man employed in something relating to the diversions to come; so that no notice was taken of anybody; a marquess and his train might have passed by as unregarded as a single fachin or cobbler. Not a window in the streets but echoed the tuning of a lute or thrumming of a guitar; for, by the way, the inhabitants of Florence are strangely addicted to the love of music, insomuch that scarce their children can go, before they can scratch some instrument or other. It was no unpleasing spectacle to our cavaliers (who, seeing they were not observed, resolved to make observations) to behold the diversity of figures and postures of many of these musicians. Here you should have an affected valet, who mimicked the behavior of his master, leaning carelessly against the window, with his head on one side, in a languishing posture, whining in a low mournful voice, some dismal complaint; while, from his sympathizing theorbo, issued a bass no less doleful to the hearers. In opposition to him was set up perhaps a cobbler, with the wretched skeleton of a guitar, battered and waxed together by his own industry, and who with three strings out of tune, and his own tearing hoarse voice, would rack attention from the neighborhood, to the great affliction of many more moderate practitioners who, no doubt, were full as desirous to be heard. By this time Aurelian's servant had taken a lodging and was returned, to give his master an account of it. The cavaliers, grown weary of that ridiculous entertainment, which was diverting at first sight, retired whither the lackey conducted them; who, according to their directions, had sought out one of the most obscure streets in the city. All that day, to the evening, was spent in sending from one broker's shop to another, to furnish them with habits, since they had not time to make any new.

There was, it happened, but one to be got rich enough to please our young gentlemen, so many were taken up upon this occasion. While they

were in dispute and complimenting one another, (Aurelian protesting that Hippolito should wear it, and he, on t'other hand, forswearing it as bitterly,) a servant of Hippolito's came up and ended the controversy; telling them, that he had met below with the valet de chambre of a gentleman who was one of the greatest gallants about the town, but was at this time in such a condition he could not possibly be at the entertainment; whereupon the valet had designed to dress himself up in his master's apparel, and try his talent at court; which he hearing, told him he would inform him how he might bestow the habit for some time much more to his profit if not to his pleasure, so acquainted him with the occasion his master had for it. Hippolito sent for the fellow up, who was not so fond of his design as not to be bought off it, but upon having his own demand granted for the use of it, brought it; it was very rich, and upon trial, as fit for Hippolito as if it had been made for him. The ceremony was performed in the morning, in the great Dome, with all magnificence correspondent to the wealth of the great Duke, and the esteem he had for the noble pair. The next morning was to be a tilting, and the same night a masquing ball at Court. To omit the description of the universal joy, (that had diffused itself through all the conduits of wine, which conveyed it in large measures to the people,) and only relate those effects of it which concern our present adventurers, you must know, that about the fall of the evening, and at that time when the equilibrium of day and night for some time holds the air in a gloomy suspense between an unwillingness to leave the light and a natural impulse into the dominion of darkness, about this time our heroes, shall I say, sallied or slunk out of their lodgings, and steered toward the great palace whither, before they were arrived, such a prodigious number of torches were on fire that the day, by help of these auxiliary forces, seemed to continue its dominion; the owls and bats apprehending their mistake, in counting the hours, retired again to a convenient darkness; for Madam Night was no more to be seen than she was to be heard; and the chemists were of opinion that her fuliginous damps, rarefied by the abundance of flame, were evaporated.

Now the reader I suppose to be upon thorns at this and the like impertinent digressions, but let him alone and he'll come to himself; at which time I think fit to acquaint him, that when I digress, I am at that time writing to please myself; when I continue the thread of the story, I write to please him; supposing him a reasonable man, I conclude him satisfied to allow me this liberty; and so I proceed.

If our cavaliers were dazzled at the splendor they beheld without doors, what surprise, think you, must they be in when, entering the Palace, they found even the lights there to be but so many foils to the bright eyes that flashed upon 'em at every turn.

A more glorious troop no occasion ever assembled; all the fair of Florence, with the most accomplished cavaliers, were present; and how-

ever Nature had been partial in bestowing on some better faces than others, art was alike indulgent to all, and industriously supplied those defects she had left, giving some addition also to her greatest excellencies. Everybody appeared well shaped, as it is to be supposed none who were conscious to themselves of any visible deformity would presume to come thither. Their apparel was equally glorious, though each differing in fancy. In short, our strangers were so well-bred, as to conclude from these apparent perfections, that there was not a masque which did not at least hide the face of a cherubim. Perhaps the ladies were not behindhand in return of a favorable opinion of them: for they were both well dressed, and had something inexpressibly pleasing in their air and mien, different from other people, and indeed differing from one another. They fancied that while they stood together they were more particularly taken notice of than any in the room, and being unwilling to be taken for strangers, which they thought they were by reason of some whispering they observed near them, they agreed upon an hour of meeting after the company should be broke up, and so separately mingled with the thickest of the assembly. Aurelian had fixed his eye upon a lady whom he had observed to have been a considerable time in close whisper with another woman. He expected with great impatience the result of that private conference, that he might have an opportunity of engaging the lady whose person was so agreeable to him. At last he perceived they were broke off, and the t'other lady seemed to have taken her leave. He had taken no small pains in the meantime to put himself in a posture to accost the lady, which, no doubt, he had happily performed had he not been interrupted; but scarce had he acquitted himself of a preliminary bow (and which, I have heard him say, was the lowest that ever he made) and had just opened his lips to deliver himself of a small compliment, which, nevertheless he was very big with, when he unluckily miscarried, by the interposal of the same lady, whose departure not long before, he had so zealously prayed for: but, as Providence would have it, there was only some very small matter forgot, which was recovered in a short whisper. The coast being again cleared, he took heart and bore up and, striking sail, repeated his ceremony to the lady, who, having obligingly returned it, he accosted her in these or the like words:

"If I do not usurp a privilege reserved for someone more happy in your acquaintance, may I presume, Madam, to entreat (for a while) the favor of your conversation, at least till the arrival of whom you expect, provided you are not tired of me before? For then upon the least intimation of uneasiness, I will not fail of doing myself the violence to withdraw for your release." The lady made him answer, she did not expect anybody; by which he might imagine her conversation not of value to be bespoke, and to afford it him, were but farther to convince him to her own cost. He replied, She had already said enough to convince him of something he

heartily wished might not be to his cost in the end. She pretended not to understand him; but told him, If he already found himself grieved with her conversation, he would have sufficient reason to repent the rashness of his first demand before they had ended: for that now she intended to hold discourse with him on purpose to punish his unadvisedness, in presuming upon a person whose dress and mien might not (may be) be disagreeable to have wit. "I must confess," replied Aurelian, "myself guilty of a presumption, and willingly submit to the punishment you intend: and though it be an aggravation of a crime to persevere in its justification, yet I cannot help defending an opinion in which now I am more confirmed, that probable conjectures may be made of the ingenious disposition of the mind, from the fancy and choice of apparel." "The humor I grant ye," said the lady, "or constitution of the person, whether melancholic or brisk; but I should hardly pass my censure upon so slight an indication of wit: for there is your brisk fool as well as your brisk man of sense, and so of the melancholic. I confess 'tis possible a fool may reveal himself by his dress, in wearing something extravagantly singular and ridiculous, or in preposterous suiting of colors; but a decency of habit (which is all that men of best sense pretend to) may be acquired by custom and example, without putting the person to a superfluous expense of wit for the contrivance; and though there should be occasion for it, few are so unfortunate in their relations and acquaintance not to have some friend capable of giving them advice, if they are not too ignorantly conceited to ask it." Aurelian was so pleased with the easiness and smartness of her expostulation, that he forgot to make a reply, when she seemed to expect it; but being a woman of a quick apprehension and justly sensible of her own perfections, she soon perceived he did not grudge his attention. However, she had a mind to put it upon him to turn the discourse, so went on upon the same subject. "Signior," said she, "I have been looking round me, and by your maxim I cannot discover one fool in the company; for they are all well drest." This was spoken with an air of raillery that awakened the cavalier, who immediately made answer: "'Tis true, Madam, we see there may be as much variety of good fancies as of faces, yet there may be many of both kinds borrowed and adulterate if inquired into; and as you were pleased to observe, the invention may be foreign to the person who puts it in practice; and as good an opinion as I have of an agreeable dress, I should be loth to answer for the wit of all about us." "I believe you," says the lady, "and hope you are convinced of your error, since you must allow it impossible to tell who of all this assembly did or did not make choice of their own apparel." "Not all," said Aurelian, "there is an ungain[li]ness in some which betrays them. Look ye there," says he, pointing to a lady who stood playing with the tassels of her girdle, "I dare answer for that lady, though she be very well dressed, 'tis more than she knows." His fair unknown could not forbear laughing at his particular

distinction, and freely told him he had indeed lighted upon one who knew as little as anybody in the room, herself excepted. "Ah! Madam," replied Aurelian, "you know everything in the world but your own perfections, and you only know not those, because 'tis the top of perfection not to know them. "How?" replied the lady, "I thought it had been the extremity of knowledge to know one's self." Aurelian had a little overstrained himself in that compliment, and I am of opinion would have been puzzled to have brought himself off readily; but by good fortune the music came into the room and gave him an opportunity to seem to decline an answer, because the company prepared to dance. He only told her he was too mean a conquest for her wit who was already a slave to the charms of her person. She thanked him for his compliment, and briskly told him she ought to have made him a return in praise of his wit, but she hoped he was a man more happy than to be dissatisfied with any of his own endowments; and if it were so, that he had not a just opinion of himself, she knew herself incapable of saying anything to beget one. Aurelian did not know well what to make of this last reply; for he always abhorred anything that was conceited, with which this seemed to reproach him. But however modest he had been heretofore in his own thoughts, yet never was he so distrustful of his good behavior as now, being rallied so by a person whom he took to be of judgment. Yet he resolved to take no notice, but with an air unconcerned and full of good humor entreated her to dance with him. She promised him to dance with nobody else, nor I believe had she inclination; for notwithstanding her tartness, she was upon equal terms with him as to the liking of each other's person and humor, and only gave those little hints to try his temper; there being certainly no greater sign of folly and ill-breeding, than to grow serious and concerned at anything spoken in raillery: for his part, he was strangely and insensibly fallen in love with her shape, wit and air; which, together with a white hand, he had seen (perhaps not accidentally) were enough to have subdued a more stubborn heart than ever he was master of; and for her face, which he had not seen, he bestowed upon her the best his imagination could furnish him with. I should by right now describe her dress, which was extremely agreeable and rich, but 'tis possible I might err in some material pin or other, in the sticking of which maybe the whole grace of the drapery depended. Well, they danced several times together, and no less to the satisfaction of the whole company than of themselves; for at the end of each dance, some public note of applause or other was given to the graceful couple.

Aurelian was amazed that among all that danced or stood in view he could not see Hippolito; but concluding that he had met with some pleasing conversation, and was withdrawn to some retired part of the room, he forbore his search till the mirth of that night should be over, and the company ready to break up, where we will leave him for a while, to see what became of his adventurous friend.

Hippolito, a little after he had parted with Aurelian, was got among a knot of ladies and cavaliers, who were looking upon a large gold cup set with jewels, in which his Royal Highness had drunk to the prosperity of the new-married couple at dinner, and which afterward he presented to his Cousin Donna Catharina. He among the rest was very intent admiring the richness, workmanship and beauty of the cup, when a lady came behind him and pulling him by the elbow, made a sign she would speak with him. Hippolito, who knew himself an utter stranger to Florence and everybody in it, immediately guessed she had mistaken him for her acquaintance, as indeed it happened. However, he resolved not to discover himself till he should be assured of it; having followed her into a set window remote from company, she addressed herself to him in this manner: "Signior Don Lorenzo," said she, "I am overjoyed to see you are so speedily recovered of your wounds, which by report were much more dangerous than to have suffered your coming abroad so soon; but I must accuse you of great indiscretion, in appearing in a habit which so many must needs remember you to have worn upon the like occasion not long ago; I mean at the Marriage of Don Cynthio with your sister Atalanta. I do assure you, you were known by it, both to Juliana and myself, who was so far concerned for you as to desire me to tell you that her brother Don Fabritio (who saw you when you came in with another gentleman) had eyed you very narrowly, and is since gone out of the room, she knows not upon what design. However, she would have you for your own sake be advised and circumspect when you depart this place, lest you should be set upon unawares; you know the hatred Don Fabritio has borne you ever since you had the fortune to kill his kinsman in a duel." Here she paused as if expecting his reply; but Hippolito was so confounded that he stood mute, and contemplating the hazard he had ignorantly brought himself into, forgot his design of informing the lady of her mistake. She, finding he made her no answer, went on. "I perceive," continued she, "you are in some surprise at what I have related, and maybe are doubtful of the truth; but I thought you had been better acquainted with your cousin Leonora's voice, than to have forgot it so soon. Yet in complaisance to your ill memory, I will put you past doubt, by showing you my face." With that she pulled off her mask, and discovered to Hippolito (now more amazed than ever) the most angelic face that he had ever beheld. He was just about to have made her some answer when, clapping on her mask again without giving him time, she happily for him pursued her discourse. (For 'tis odds but he had made some discovery of himself in the surprise he was in.) Having taken him familiarly by the hand, now she had made herself known to him. "Cousin Lorenzo," added she, "you may perhaps have taken it unkindly that, during the time of your indisposition, by reason of your wounds, I have not been to visit you; I do assure you it was not for want of any inclination I had both to see and serve you to

my power; but you are well acquainted with the severity of my father, whom you know how lately you have disobliged. I am mighty glad that I have met with you here, where I have had an opportunity to tell you what so much concerns your safety, which I am afraid you will not find in Florence; considering the great power Don Fabritio and his father, the Marquess of Viterbo, have in this city. I have another thing to inform you of, that whereas Don Fabio had interested himself in your cause, in opposition to the Marquess of Viterbo, by reason of the long animosity between them, all hopes of his countenance and assistance are defeated; for there has been a proposal of reconciliation made to both Houses, and it is said it will be confirmed (as most such ancient quarrels are at last) by the marriage of Juliana the Marquess's daughter, with Aurelian, son to Don Fabio: to which effect the old gentleman sent t'other day to Siena, where Aurelian has been educated, to hasten his coming to town; but the messenger returning this morning, brought word, that the same day he arrived at Siena, Aurelian had set out for Florence, in company with a young Spanish nobleman, his intimate friend; so it is believed they are both in town, and not unlikely in this room in masquerade.

Hippolito could not forbear smiling to himself at these last words. For ever since the naming of Don Fabio he had been very attentive; but before, his thoughts were wholly taken up with the beauty of the face he had seen, and from the time she had taken him by the hand, a successive warmth and chillness had played about his heart, and surprised him with an unusual transport. He was in a hundred minds whether he should make her sensible of her error or no; but considering he could expect no farther conference with her after he should discover himself, and that as yet he knew not of her place of abode, he resolved to humor the mistake a little further. Having her still by the hand, which he squeezed somewhat more eagerly than is usual for cousins to do, in a low and undistinguishable voice, he let her know how much he held himself obliged to her, and avoiding as many words as handsomely he could, at the same time entreated her to give him her advice, toward the management of himself in this affair. Leonora, who never from the beginning had entertained the least scruple of distrust, imagined he spoke faintly, as not being yet perfectly recovered in his strength; and withal considering that the heat of the room, by reason of the crowd, might be uneasy to a person in his condition, she kindly told him that if he were as inclinable to dispense with the remainder of that night's diversion as she was, and had no other engagement upon him, by her consent they should both steal out of the assembly and go to her house, where they might with more freedom discourse about a business of that importance, and where he might take something to refresh himself, if he were, as she conceived him to be, indisposed with his long standing. Judge you whether the

proposal were acceptable to Hippolito or no. He had been ruminating with himself how to bring something like this about, and had almost despaired of it; when of a sudden he found the success of his design had prevented his own endeavors. He told his cousin in the same key as before, that he was unwilling to be the occasion of her divorce from so much good company; but for his own part, he was afraid he had presumed too much upon his recovery in coming abroad so soon, and that he found himself so unwell, he feared he should be quickly forced to retire. Leonora stayed not to make him any other reply, only tipped him upon the arm, and bid him follow her at a convenient distance to avoid observation.

Whoever had seen the joy that was in Hippolito's countenance, and the sprightliness with which he followed his beautiful conductress, would scarce have taken him for a person grieved with uncured wounds. She led him down a back pair of stairs, into one of the Palace gardens which had a door opening into the Piazza, not far from where Don Mario her father lived. They had little discourse by the way, which gave Hippolito time to consider of the best way of discovering himself. A thousand things came into his head in a minute, yet nothing that pleased him; and after so many contrivances as he had formed for the discovery of himself, he found it more rational for him not to reveal himself at all that night, since he could not foresee what effect the surprise would have, she must needs be in, at the appearance of a stranger whom she had never seen before, yet whom she had treated so familiarly. He knew women were apt to shriek or swoon upon such occasions, and should she happen to do either, he might be at a loss how to bring himself off. He thought he might easily pretend to be indisposed somewhat more than ordinary, and so make an excuse to go to his own lodging. It came into his head, too, that under pretence of giving her an account of his health, he might enquire of her the means how a letter might be conveyed to her the next morning, wherein he might inform her gently of her mistake, and insinuate something of that passion he had conceived, which he was sure he could not have opportunity to speak of if he bluntly revealed himself. He had just resolved upon this method, as they were come to the great gates of the court, when Leonora stopping to let him go in before her, he of a sudden fetched his breath violently as if some stitch or twingeing smart had just then assaulted him. She enquired the matter of him, and advised him to make haste into the house that he might sit down and rest him. He told her he found himself so ill that he judged it more convenient for him to go home while he was in a condition to move, for he feared if he should once settle himself to rest, he might not be able to stir. She was much troubled, and would have had a chair made ready and servants to carry him home, but he made answer, he would not have any of her father's servants know of his being abroad, and that just now he had an interval of ease, which he hoped would continue till he made a shift to reach his

own lodgings. Yet if she pleased to inform him how he might give an account of himself the next morning, in a line or two, he would not fail to give her the thanks due to her great kindness; and withal would let her know something which would not a little surprise her, though now he had not time to acquaint her with it. She showed him a little window at the corner of the house, where one should wait to receive his letter, and was just taking her leave of him, when seeing him search hastily in his pocket, she asked him if he missed anything; he told her he thought a wound which was not thoroughly healed bled a little, and that he had lost his handkerchief. His design took; for she immediately gave him hers: which indeed accordingly he applied to the only wound he was then grieved with; which though it went quite through his heart, yet thank God, was not mortal. He was not a little rejoiced at his good fortune in getting so early a favor from his mistress, and notwithstanding the violence he did himself to personate a sick man, he could not forbear giving some symptoms of an extraordinary content; and telling her that he did not doubt to receive a considerable proportion of ease from the application of what had so often kissed her fair hand. Leonora who did not suspect the compliment, told him she should be heartily glad if that or anything in her power might contribute to his recovery; and wishing him well home, went into her house, as much troubled for her cousin as he was joyful for his mistress.

Hippolito as soon as she was gone in, began to make his remarks about the house, walking round the great court, viewing the gardens and all the passages leading to that side of the Piazza. Having sufficiently informed himself, with a heart full of love, and a head full of stratagem, he walked toward his lodging, impatient till the arrival of Aurelian that he might give himself vent. In which interim, let me take the liberty to digress a little, and tell the reader something which I do not doubt he has apprehended himself long ago, if he be not the dullest reader in the world; yet only for order's sake, let me tell him I say, that a young Gentleman (Cousin to the aforesaid Don Fabritio) happened one night to have some words at a gaming house with one Lorenzo, which created a quarrel of fatal consequence to the former, who was killed upon the spot, and likely to be so to the latter, who was very desperately wounded.

Fabritio being much concerned for his kinsman, vowed revenge (according to the ancient and laudable custom of Italy) upon Lorenzo if he survived, or in case of his death (if it should happen to anticipate that, much more swinging death which he had in store for him) upon his next of kin, and so to descend lineally like an English estate, to all the heirs male of this family. This same Fabritio had indeed (as Leonora told Hippolito) taken particular notice of him from his first entrance into the room, and was so far doubtful as to go out immediately himself, and make enquiry concerning Lorenzo, but was quickly informed of the greatness

of his error, in believing a man to be abroad who was so ill of his wounds, that they now despaired of his recovery; and thereupon returned to the ball very well satisfied, but not before Leonora and Hippolito were departed.

So, Reader, having now discharged my conscience of a small discovery which I thought myself obliged to make to thee, I proceed to tell thee, that our friend Aurelian had by this time danced himself into a net which he neither could nor, which is worse, desired to untangle.

His soul was charmed to the movement of her body: an air so graceful, so sweet, so easy and so great, he had never seen. She had something of majesty in her, which appeared to be born with her; and though it struck an awe into the beholders, yet was it sweetened with a familiarity of behavior, which rendered it agreeable to everybody. The grandeur of her mien was not stiff, but unstudied and unforced, mixed with a simplicity; free, yet not loose nor affected. If the former seemed to condescend, the latter seemed to aspire; and both to unite in the center of perfection. Every turn she gave in dancing snatcht Aurelian into a rapture, and he had like to have been out two or three times with following his eyes, which she led about as slaves to her heels.

As soon as they had done dancing, he began to complain of his want of breath and lungs, to speak sufficiently in her commendation. She smilingly told him he did ill to dance so much then; yet in consideration of the pains he had taken more than ordinary upon her account, she would bate him a great deal of compliment, but with this proviso, that he was to discover to her who he was. Aurelian was unwilling for the present to own himself to be really the man he was; when a sudden thought came into his head to take upon him the name and character of Hippolito, who he was sure was not known in Florence. He thereupon, after a little pause, pretended to recall himself in this manner: "Madam, it is no small demonstration of the entire resignation which I have made of my heart to your chains, since the secrets of it are no longer in my power. I confess I only took Florence in my way, not designing any longer residence than should be requisite to inform the curiosity of a traveller, of the rarities of the place. Whether happiness or misery will be the consequence of that curiosity, I am yet in fear, and submit to your determination; but sure I am, not to depart Florence till you have made me the most miserable man in it, and refuse me the fatal kindness of dying at your feet. I am by birth a Spaniard, of the city of Toledo; my name Hippolito di Saviolina: I was yesterday a man free as Nature made the first; to-day I am fallen into a captivity which must continue with my life, and which it is in your power to make much dearer to me. Thus in obedience to your commands, and contrary to my resolution of remaining unknown in this place, I have informed you, Madam, what I am; what I shall be, I desire to know from you; at least, I hope the free discovery I have made of myself will encourage you to trust me with the knowledge of your person."

Here a low bow and a deep sigh put an end to his discourse, and signified his expectation of her reply, which was to this purpose — (But I had forgot to tell you, that Aurelian kept off his mask from the time that he told her he was of Spain, till the period of his relation.) "Had I thought," said she, "that my curiosity would have brought me in debt, I should certainly have forborne it; or at least have agreed with you beforehand about the rate of your discovery; then I had not brought myself to the inconveniency of being censured, either of too much easiness, or reservedness; but to avoid, as much as I can, the extremity of either, I am resolved but to discover myself in part, and will endeavor to give you as little occasion as I can, either to boast of or ridicule the behavior of the women of Florence in your travels."

Aurelian interrupted her, and swore very solemnly (and the more heartily, I believe, because he then indeed spoke truth) that he would make Florence the place of his abode, whatever concerns he had elsewhere. She advised him to be cautious how he swore to his expressions of gallantry; and farther told him she now hoped she should make him a return to all the fine things he had said, since she gave him his choice whether he would know who she was, or see her face.

Aurelian, who was really in love, and in whom consideration would have been a crime, greedily embraced the latter, since she assured him at that time he should not know both. Well, what followed? Why, she pulled off her mask, and appeared to him at once in the glory of beauty. But who can tell the astonishment Aurelian felt? He was for a time senseless: admiration had suppressed his speech, and his eyes were entangled in light. In short, to be made sensible of his condition, we must conceive some idea of what he beheld, which is not to be imagined till seen, nor then to be expressed. Now see the impertinence and conceitedness of an author, who will have a fling at a description, which he has prefaced with an impossibility. One might have seen something in her composition resembling the formation of Epicurus his world, as if every atom of beauty had concurred to unite an excellency. Had that curious painter lived in her days, he might have avoided his painful search, when he collected from the choicest pieces the most choice features, and by a due disposition and judicious symmetry of those exquisite parts, made one whole and perfect Venus. Nature seemed here to have played the plagiary, and to have molded into substance the most refined thoughts of inspired poets. Her eyes diffused rays comfortable as warmth, and piercing as the light; they would have worked a passage through the straightest pores, and with a delicious heat, have played about the most obdurate frozen heart, until 'twere melted down to love. Such majesty and affability were in her looks; so alluring, yet commanding was her presence, that it mingled awe with love; kindling a flame which trembled to aspire. She had danced much, which, together with her being close masked, gave her a tincture of carna-

tion more than ordinary. But Aurelian (from whom I had every tittle of her description) fancied he saw a little nest of cupids break from the tresses of her hair, and every one officiously betake himself to his task. Some fanned with their downy wings, her glowing cheeks; while others brushed the balmy dew from off her face, leaving alone a heavenly moisture bubbling on her lips, on which they drank and revelled for their pains. Nay, so particular were their allotments in her service, that Aurelian was very positive a young cupid who was but just pin-feathered, employed his naked quills to pick her teeth. And a thousand other things his transport represented to him, which none but lovers who have experience of such visions will believe.

As soon as he awaked and found his speech come to him, he employed it to this effect:

"'Tis enough that I have seen a Divinity — nothing but mercy can inhabit these perfections — their utmost rigor brings a death preferable to any life, but what they give — Use me, Madam, as you please; for by your fair self, I cannot think a bliss beyond what now I feel — You wound with pleasure, and if you kill, it must be with transport — Ah! Yet methinks to live — O Heaven! to have Life pronounced by those blessed lips — Did they not inspire where they command, it were an immediate death of joy."

Aurelian was growing a little too loud with his admiration, had she not just then interrupted him, by clapping on her masque, and telling him they should be observed, if he proceeded in his extravagance; and withal, that his passion was too sudden to be real, and too violent to be lasting. He replied, Indeed it might not be very lasting, (with a submissive mournful voice) but it would continue during his life. That it was sudden he denied, for she had raised it by degrees from his first sight of her, by a continued discovery of charms, in her mien and conversation, till she thought fit to set fire to the train she had laid, by the lightning of her face; and then he could not help it, if he were blown up.

He begged her to believe the sincerity of his passion, at least to enjoin him something which might tend to the convincing of her incredulity. She said she should find a time to make some trials of him; but for the first, she charged him not to follow or observe her after the dissolution of the assembly. He promised to obey, and entreated her to tell him but her name, that he might have recourse to that in his affliction for her absence, if he were able to survive it. She desired him to live by all means; and if he must have a name to play with, to call her Incognita, till he were better informed.

The company breaking up, she took her leave, and at his earnest entreaty, gave him a short vision of her face; which, then dressed in an obliging smile, caused another fit of transport, which lasted till she was gone out of sight. Aurelian gathered up his spirits and walked slowly

towards his lodging, never remembering that he had lost Hippolito, till upon turning the corner of a street, he heard a noise of fighting; and coming near, saw a man make a vigorous defence against two, who pressed violently upon him. He then thought of Hippolito, and fancying he saw the glimmering of diamond buttons such as Hippolito had upon the sleeves of his habit, immediately drew to his assistance; and with that eagerness and resolution that the assailants, finding their unmanly odds defeated, took to their heels. The person rescued by the generous help of Aurelian, came toward him; but as he would have stooped to have saluted him, dropped fainting at his feet. Aurelian, now he was so near him, perceived plainly Hippolito's habit, and stepped hastily to take him up. Just as some of the guards (who were going the rounds, apprehensive of such disorders in an universal merriment) came up to him with lights, and had taken prisoners the two men, whom they met with their swords drawn; when looking in the face of the wounded man, he found it was not Hippolito, but his governor Claudio, in the habit he had worn at the ball. He was extremely surprised, as were the prisoners, who confessed their design to have been upon Lorenzo; grounding their mistake upon the habit which was known to have been his. They were two men who formerly had been servants to him whom Lorenzo had unfortunately slain.

They made a shift to bring Claudio to himself; and part of the guard carrying off the prisoners, whom Aurelian desired they would secure, the rest accompanied him, bearing Claudio in their arms to his lodging. He had not patience to forbear asking for Hippolito by the way; whom Claudio assured him he had left safe in his chamber, above two hours since. That his coming home so long before the divertisements were ended, and undressing himself, had given him the unhappy curiosity to put on his habit and go to the palace; in his return from whence, he was set upon in the manner he found him, which if he recovered, he must own his life indebted to his timely assistance.

Being come to the house, they carrried him to his bed, and having sent for surgeons, Aurelian rewarded and dismissed the guard. He stayed the dressing of Claudio's wounds, which were many, though they hoped none mortal; and leaving him to his rest, went to give Hippolito an account of what had happened, whom he found with a table before him, leaning upon both his elbows, his face covered with his hands, and so motionless that Aurelian concluded he was asleep. Seeing several papers lie before him, half written and blotted out again, he thought to steal softly to the table and discover what he had been employed about. Just as he reached forth his hand to take up one of the papers, Hippolito started up so on the sudden, as surprised Aurelian and made him leap back; Hippolito, on the other hand, not supposing that anybody had been near him, was so disordered with the appearance of a man at his elbow, whom his amazement did not permit him to distinguish, that he leaped hastily to his sword,

and in turning him about, overthrew the stand and candles. Here were they both left in the dark, Hippolito groping about with his sword, and thrusting at every chair that he felt oppose him. Aurelian was scarce come to himself when, thinking to step back toward the door that he might inform his friend of his mistake, without exposing himself to his blind fury; Hippolito heard him stir, and made a full thrust with such violence, that the hilt of the sword meeting with Aurelian's breast, beat him down, and Hippolito atop of him, as a servant, alarmed with the noise, came into the chamber with a light. The fellow trembled, and thought they were both dead, till Hippolito, raising himself to see whom he had got under him, swooned away upon the discovery of his friend. But such was the extraordinary care of Providence in directing the sword, that it only passed under his arm, giving no wound to Aurelian, but a little bruise between his shoulder and breast with the hilt. He got up, scarce recovered of his fright, and by the help of the servant laid Hippolito upon the bed; who when he was come to himself could hardly be persuaded that his friend was before him and alive, till he showed him his breast, where was nothing of a wound. Hippolito begged his pardon a thousand times, and cursed himself as often, who was so near to committing the most execrable act of amicide.

They dismissed the fellow, and with many embraces, congratulated their fortunate delivery from the mischief which came so near them, each blaming himself as the occasion, Aurelian accusing his own unadvisedness in stealing upon Hippolito, Hippolito blaming his own temerity and weakness in being so easily frighted to disorder; and last of all, his blindness in not knowing his dearest friend. But there he gave a sigh, and passionately taking Aurelian by the hand, cried, "Ah! my friend, love is indeed blind, when it would not suffer me to see you" —. There arose another sigh; a sympathy seized Aurelian immediately. (For, by the way, sighing is as catching among lovers, as yawning among the vulgar.) Besides, hearing the name of love made him fetch such a sigh, that Hippolito's were but fly-blows in comparison; that was answered with all the might Hippolito had, Aurelian plied him close till they were both out of breath.

Thus not a word passed, though each wondered why t'other sighed; at last concluded it to be only complaisance to one another.

Aurelian broke the silence, by telling him the misfortune of his governor. Hippolito rejoiced as at the luckiest accident which could have befallen him. Aurelian wondered at his unseasonable mirth, and demanded the cause of it. He answered It would necessitate his longer stay in Florence, and for aught he knew, be the means of bringing a happy period to his amour.

His friend thought him to be little better than a madman, when he perceived him of a sudden snatch out of his bosom a handkerchief, which

having kissed with a great deal of ardor, he took Aurelian by the hand, and smiling at the surprise he saw him in:

"Your Florentine Cupid is certainly," said he, "the most expert in the world. I have since I saw you beheld the most beautiful of women. I am fallen desperately in love with her, and those papers which you see so blotted and scattered, are but so many essays which I have made to the declaration of my passion. And this handkerchief which I so zealously caress is the inestimable token which I have to make myself known to her. Oh, Leonora!" continued he, "how hast thou stamped thine image on my soul! How much dearer am I to myself, since I have had thy heavenly form in keeping! Now, my Aurelian, I am worthy thee; my exalted love has dignified me, and raised me far above thy poor former despicable Hippolito."

Aurelian seeing the rapture he was in, thought it in vain to expect a settled relation of the adventure, so was reaching to the table for some of the papers, but Hippolito told him, If he would have a little patience he would acquaint him with the whole matter; and thereupon told him word for word how he was mistaken for Lorenzo, and his management of himself. Aurelian commended his prudence in not discovering himself; and told him, if he could spare so much time from the contemplation of his mistress, he would inform him of an adventure, though not so accidental, yet of as great concern to his own future happiness. So related all that had happened to him with his beautiful Incognita.

Having ended the story, they began to consider of the means they were to use toward a re-view of their mistresses. Aurelian was confounded at the difficulty he conceived on his part. He understood from Hippolito's adventure that his father knew of his being in town, whom he must unavoidably disoblige if he yet concealed himself, and disobey if he came into his sight; for he had already entertained an aversion for Juliana, in apprehension of her being imposed on him. His Incognita was rooted in his heart, yet could he not comfort himself with any hopes when he should see her: he knew not where she lived, and she had made him no promise of a second conference. Then did he repent his inconsiderate choice in preferring the momentary vision of her face to a certain intelligence of her person. Every thought that succeeded distracted him, and all the hopes he could presume upon were within compass of the two days' merriment yet to come; for which space he hoped he might excuse his remaining concealed to his father.

Hippolito, on the other side (though Aurelian thought him in a much better way), was no less afflicted for himself. The difficulties which he saw in his friend's circumstances, put him upon finding out a great many more in his own, than really there were. But what terrified him most of all, was his being an utter stranger to Leonora: she had not the least knowledge of him but through mistake, and consequently could form no

idea of him to his advantage. He looked upon it as an unlucky thought in Aurelian to take upon him his name, since possibly the two ladies were acquainted, and should they communicate to each other their adventures, they might both reasonably suffer in their opinions, and be thought guilty of falsehood, since it would appear to them as one person pretending to two. Aurelian told him there was but one remedy for that, which was for Hippolito, in the same manner that he had done, to make use of his name when he writ to Leonora, and use what arguments he could to persuade her to secrecy, lest his father should know of the reason which kept him concealed in town. And it was likely, though perhaps she might not immediately entertain his passion; yet she would out of generosity conceal what was hidden only for her sake.

Well, this was concluded on, after a great many other reasons used on either side, in favor of the contrivance. They at last argued themselves into a belief that Fortune had befriended them with a better plot than their regular thinking could have contrived. So soon had they convinced themselves in what they were willing to believe.

Aurelian laid himself down to rest, that is, upon the bed; for he was a better lover than to pretend to sleep that night, while Hippolito set himself again to frame his letter designed for Leonora. He writ several, at last pitched upon one, — and very probably the worst, — as you may guess when you read it in its proper place.

It was break of day when the servant, who had been employed all the foregoing day in procuring accoutrements for the two cavaliers to appear in at the tilting, came into the room, and told them all the young gentlemen in the town were trying their equipage and preparing to be early in the lists. They made themselves ready with all expedition at the alarm: and Hippolito having made a visit to his governor, dispatched a messenger with the letter and directions to Leonora. At the signal agreed upon, the casement was opened and a string let down, to which the bearer having fastened the letter, saw it drawn up, and returned. It were a vain attempt to describe Leonora's surprise, when she read the superscription: The Unfortunate Aurelian, to the Beautiful Leonora. After she was a little recovered from her amaze, she recollected to herself all the passages between her and her supposed cousin, and immediately concluded him to be Aurelian. Then several little circumstances which she thought might have been sufficient to have convinced her, represented themselves to her; and she was in a strange uneasiness to think of her free carriage to a stranger.

She was once in a mind to have burned the letter, or to have stayed for an opportunity to send it again. But she was a woman, and her curiosity opposed itself to all thoughts of that nature. At length, with a firm resolution, she opened it, and found word for word, what is underwritten:

"MADAM,

If your fair eyes, upon the breaking up of this, meet with somewhat too quick a surprise, make thence, I beseech you, some reflection upon the condition I must needs have been in, at the sudden appearance of that sun of beauty, which at once shone so full upon my soul. I could not immediately disengage myself from that maze of charms, to let you know how unworthy a captive your eyes had made through mistake. Sure, Madam, you cannot but remember my disorder, of which your innocent (innocent, though perhaps to me, fatal) error made a charitable (but wide) construction. Your tongue pursued the victory of your eyes, and you did not give me time to rally my poor disordered senses, so as to make a tolerable retreat. Pardon, Madam, the continuation of the deceit, and call it not so, that I appeared to be other than myself; for Heaven knows I was not then myself, nor am I now my own. You told me something that concerned me nearly, as to a marriage my father designed me, and much more nearly in being told by you. For Heaven's sake, disclose not to anybody your knowledge of me, that I may not be forced to an immediate act of disobedience; for if my future services and inviolate love cannot recommend me to your favor, I shall find more comfort in the cold embraces of a grave, than in the arms of the never-so-much-admired (but by me dreaded) Juliana. Think, Madam, of those severe circumstances I lie under; and withal I beg you, think it is in your power, and only in your power, to make them happy as my wishes, or much more miserable than I am able to imagine. That dear, inestimable (though undesigned) favor which I received from you, shall this day distinguish me from the crowd of your admirers; that which I really applied to my inward bleeding wound, the welcome wound which you have made, and which, unless from you, does wish no cure; then pardon and have pity on, Oh Adored Leonora, him who is yours by creation as he is Heaven's, though never so unworthy. Have pity on

Your
Aurelian."

She read the letter over and over, then flung it by, then read it again; the novelty of the adventure made her repeat her curiosity, and take more than ordinary pains to understand it. At last her familiarity with the expressions grew to an intimacy, and what she at first permitted, she now began to like. She thought there was something in it a little more serious than to be barely gallantry. She wondered at her own blindness, and fancied she could remember something of a more becoming air in the stranger than was usual to Lorenzo. This thought was parent to another of the same kind, till a long chain successively had birth, and every one somewhat more than other, in favor of the supposed Aurelian. She reflected upon his discretion, in deferring the discovery of himself, till a little time had, as it were, weaned her from her persuasion, and by re-

moving her farther from her mistake, had prepared her for a full and determinate convincement. She thought his behavior in personating a sick man so readily upon the first hint, was not amiss, and smiled to think of his excuse to procure her handkerchief; and last of all, his sifting out the means to write to her, which he had done with that modesty and respect she could not tell how to find fault with it.

She had proceeded thus far in a maze of thought, when she started to find herself so lost to her reason, and would have trod back again that path of deluding fancy, accusing herself of fondness and inconsiderate easiness in giving credit to the letter of a person whose face she never saw, and whose first acquaintance with her was a treachery, and he who could so readily deliver his tongue of a lie upon a surprise, was scarce to be trusted when he had sufficient time allowed him to beget a fiction, and means to perfect the birth.

How did she know this to be Aurelian, if he were? Nay farther, put it to the extremity, What if she should upon farther conversation with him proceed to love him? What hopes were there for her? Or how could she consent to marry a man already destined for another woman? Nay, a woman that was her friend, whose marrying with him was to complete the happy reconciliation of two noble families, and which might prevent the effusion of much blood likely to be shed in that quarrel. Besides, she should incur share of the guilt, which he would draw upon him by disobedience of his father, who she was sure would not be consenting to it.

'Tis strange, now, but all accounts agree that just here Leonora, who had run like a violent stream against Aurelian hitherto, now retorted with as much precipitation in his favor. I could never get anybody to give me a satisfactory reason for her sudden and dexterous change of opinion just at that stop, which made me conclude she could not help it, and that Nature boiled over in her at that time when it had so fair an opportunity to show itself. For Leonora, it seems, was a woman beautiful and otherwise of an excellent disposition, but in the bottom a very woman. This last objection, this opportunity of persuading man to disobedience, determined the matter in favor of Aurelian, more than all his excellencies and qualifications, take him as Aurelian, or Hippolito, or both together.

Well, the spirit of contradiction and of Eve was strong in her, and she was in a fair way to love Aurelian, for she liked him already; that it was Aurelian she no longer doubted, for had it been a villain who had only taken his name upon him for any ill designs, he would never have slipped so favorable an opportunity as when they were alone, and in the night coming through the garden and broad space before the Piazza. In short, thus much she resolved, at least to conceal the knowledge she had of him, as he had entreated her in his letter, and to make particular remarks of his behavior that day in the lists, which should it happen to

charm her with an absolute liking of his person, she resolved to dress herself to the best advantage, and mustering up all her graces, out of pure revenge to kill him downright.

I would not have the reader now be impertinent and look upon this to be force or a whim of the author's, that a woman should proceed so far in her approbation of a man whom she never saw, that it is impossible, therefore ridiculous, to suppose it. Let me tell such a critic that he knows nothing of the sex if he does not know that a woman may be taken with the character and description of a man, when general and extraordinary, that she may be prepossessed with an agreeable idea of his person and conversation; and though she cannot imagine his real features or manner of wit, yet she has a general notion of what is called a fine gentleman, and is prepared to like such a one who does not disagree with that character. Aurelian, as he bore a very fair character, so was he extremely deserving to make it good, which otherways might have been to his prejudice; for oftentimes, through an imprudent indulgence to our friend's merit, we give so large a description of his excellencies that people make more room in their expectation than the intrinsic worth of the man will fill, which renders him so much the more despicable as there is emptiness to spare. 'Tis certain, though the women seldom find that out; for though they do not see so much in a man as was promised, yet they will be so kind to imagine he has some hidden excellencies which time may discover to them, so are content to allow him a considerable share of their esteem, and take him into favor upon tick. Aurelian, as he had good credit, so he had a good stock to support it, and his person was a good promising security for the payment of any obligation he could lie under to the fair sex. Hippolito, who at this time was our Aurelian, did not at all lessen him in appearing for him; so that although Leonora was indeed mistaken, she could not be said to be much in the wrong.

I could find in my heart to beg the reader's pardon for this digression if I thought he would be sensible of the civility; for I promise him, I do not intend to do it again throughout the story, though I make never so many, and though he take them never so ill. But because I began this upon a bare supposition of his impertinence, which might be somewhat impertinent in me to suppose, I do, and hope to make him amends by telling him that by the time Leonora was dressed, several ladies of her acquaintance came to accompany her to the place designed for the tilting, where we will leave them drinking chocolate till 'tis time for them to go.

Our cavaliers had by good fortune provided themselves of two curious suits of light armor, finely enamelled and gilt. Hippolito had sent to Poggio Imperiale for a couple of fine led horses which he had left there with the rest of his train at his entrance into Florence. Mounted on these and every way well equipped, they took their way, attended only by two lackeys, toward the Church di Santa Croce, before which they were to

perform their exercises of chivalry. Hippolito wore upon his helm a large plume of crimson feathers, in the midst of which was artificially placed Leonora's handkerchief. His armor was gilt, and enamelled with green and crimson. Aurelian was not so happy as to wear any token to recommend him to the notice of his mistress, so had only a plume of sky-color and white feathers, suitable to his armor, which was silver enamelled with azure. I shall not describe the habits of any other cavaliers, or of the ladies; let it suffice to tell the reader they were all very fine and very glorious, and let him dress them in what is most agreeable to his own fancy.

Our gallants entered the lists, and having made their obeisance to His Highness, turned round to salute and view the company. The scaffold was circular, so that there was no end of the delightful prospect. It seemed a glory of beauty which shone around the admiring beholders. Our lovers soon perceived the stars which were to rule their destiny, which sparkled a lustre beyond all the inferior constellations, and seemed like two suns to distribute light to all the planets in that heavenly sphere. Leonora knew her slave by his badge and blushed till the lilies and roses in her cheeks had resemblance to the plume of crimson and white handkerchief in Hippolito's crest. He made her a low bow, and reined his horse back with an extraordinary grace, into a respectful retreat. Aurelian saw his angel, his beautiful Incognita, and had no other way to make himself known to her but by saluting and bowing to her after the Spanish mode; she guessed him by it to be her new servant Hippolito, and signified her apprehension by making him a more particular and obliging return than to any of the cavaliers who had saluted her before.

The exercise that was to be performed was in general a running at the ring; and afterwards two cavaliers undertook to defend the beauty of Donna Catharina, against all who would not allow her preëminence of their mistresses. This thing was only designed for show and form, none presuming that anybody would put so great an affront upon the bride and Duke's kinswoman as to dispute her pretentions to the first place in the court of Venus. But here our cavaliers were under a mistake; for seeing a large shield carried before two knights with a lady painted upon it; not knowing who, but reading the inscription which was (in large gold letters) *Above the Insolence of Competition*. They thought themselves obliged, especially in the presence of their mistresses, to vindicate their beauty; and were just spurring on to engage the champions, when a gentleman stopping them, told them their mistake, that it was the picture of Donna Catharina, and a particular honor done to her by his Highness' commands, and not to be disputed. Upon this they would have returned to their post, much concerned for their mistake; but notice being taken by Don Ferdinand of some show of opposition that was made, he would have begged leave of the Duke to have maintained his lady's honor against

the insolence of those cavaliers; but the Duke would by no means permit it. They were arguing about it when one of them came up, before whom the shield was borne, and demanded His Highness' permission to inform those gentlemen better of their mistake, by giving them the foil. By the intercession of Don Ferdinand, leave was given them; whereupon a civil challenge was sent to the two strangers, informing them of their error, and withal telling them they must either maintain it by force of arms, or make a public acknowledgment by riding bareheaded before the picture once round the lists. The stranger-cavaliers remonstrated to the Duke how sensible they were of their error, and though they would not justify it, yet they could not decline the combat, being pressed to it beyond an honorable refusal. To the bride they sent a compliment wherein, having first begged her pardon for not knowing her picture, they gave her to understand that now they were not about to dispute her undoubted right to the crown of beauty, but the honor of being her champions was the prize they fought for, which they thought themselves as able to maintain as any other pretenders. Wherefore they prayed her that if fortune so far befriended their endeavors as to make them victors, they might receive no other reward, but to be crowned with the titles of their adversaries, and be ever after esteemed as her most humble servants. The excuse was so handsomely designed, and much better expressed than it is here, that it took effect. The Duke Don Ferdinand and his lady were so well satisfied with it as to grant their request.

While the running at the ring lasted, our cavaliers alternately bore away great share of the honor. That sport ended, marshals were appointed for the field, and everything in great form settled for the combat. The cavaliers were all in good earnest, but orders were given to bring 'em blunted lances, and to forbid the drawing of a sword upon pain of His Highness' displeasure. The trumpets sounded and they began their course. The ladies' hearts, particularly the Incognita and Leonora's beat time to the horses' hoofs, and hope and fear made a mock fight within their tender breasts, each wishing and doubting success where she liked. But as the generality of their prayers were for the graceful strangers, they accordingly succeeded. Aurelian's adversary was unhorsed in the first encounter, and Hippolito's lost both his stirrups and dropt his lance to save himself. The honor of the field was immediately granted to them, and Donna Catharina sent them both favors, which she prayed them to wear as her knights. The crowd breaking up, our cavaliers made a shift to steal off unmarked, save by the watchful Leonora and Incognita, whose eyes were never off from their respective servants. There was enquiry made for them, but to no purpose; for they, to prevent their being discovered had prepared another house, distant from their lodging, where a servant attended to disarm them, and another carried back their horses to the villa, while they walked unsuspected to their lodging; but Incognita had given command to a page

to dog 'em till the evening, at a distance, and bring her word where they were latest housed.

While several conjectures passed among the company, who were all gone to dinner at the Palace, who those cavaliers should be, Don Fabio thought himself the only man able to guess; for he knew for certain that his son and Hippolito were both in town, and was well enough pleased with his humor of remaining *incognito* till the diversions should be over, believing then that the surprise of his discovery would add much to the gallantry he had shown in masquerade; but hearing the extraordinary liking that everybody expressed, and in a particular manner, the great Duke himself, to the persons and behavior of the unknown cavaliers, the old gentleman could not forbear the vanity to tell His Highness, that he believed he had an interest in one of the gentlemen, whom he was pleased to honor with so favorable a character; and told him what reason he had to believe the one to be his son, and the other a Spanish nobleman, his friend.

This discovery having thus got vent, was diffused like air; everybody sucked it in, and let it out again with their breath to the next they met withal; and in half an hour's time it was talked of in the house where our adventurers were lodged. Aurelian was stark mad at the news, and knew what search would be immediately made for him. Hippolito, had he not been desperately in love, would certainly have taken horse and rode out of town just then; for he could make no longer doubt of being discovered, and he was afraid of the just exceptions Leonora might make to a person who had now deceived her twice. Well, we will leave them both fretting and contriving to no purpose, to look about and see what was done at the Palace, where their doom was determined much quicker than they imagined.

Dinner ended, the Duke retired with some chosen friends to a glass of wine; among whom were the Marquess of Viterbo and Don Fabio. His Highness was no stranger to the long feud that had been between the two families, and also understood what overtures of reconciliation had been lately made, with the proposals of marriage between Aurelian and the Marquess' daughter. Having waited till the wine had taken the effect proposed, and the company were raised to an uncommon pitch of cheerfulness, which he also encouraged by an example of freedom and good humor, he took an opportunity of rallying the two grave Signiors into an accommodation, that was seconded with the praises of the young couple, and the whole company joined in a large encomium upon the graces of Aurelian and the beauties of Juliana. The old fellows were tickled with delight to hear their darlings so admired, which the Duke perceiving, out of a principle of generosity and friendship, urged the present consummation of the marriage; telling them there was yet one day of public rejoicing to come, and how glad he should be to have it improved by so

acceptable an alliance; and what an honor it would be to have his cousin's marriage attended by the conjunction of so extraordinary a pair, the performance of which ceremony would crown the joy that was then in agitation, and make the last day vie for equal glory and happiness with the first. In short, by the complaisant and persuasive authority of the Duke, the Dons were wrought into a compliance, and accordingly embraced and shook hands upon the matter. This news was dispersed like the former, and Don Fabio gave orders for the enquiring out his son's lodging, that the Marquess and he might make him a visit as soon as he had acquainted Juliana with his purpose, that she might prepare herself. He found her very cheerful with Donna Catharina and several other ladies, whereupon the old gentleman, pretty well warmed with the Duke's good-fellowship, told her aloud he was come to crown their mirth with another wedding; that His Highness had been pleased to provide a husband for his daughter, and he would have her provide herself to receive him to-morrow. All the company at first, as well as Juliana herself, thought he had rallied, till the Duke coming in, confirmed the serious part of his discourse. Juliana was confounded at the haste that was imposed on her, and desired a little time to consider what she was about. But the Marquess told her she should have all the rest of her life to consider in; that Aurelian should come and consider with her in the morning, if she pleased; but in the meantime, he advised her to go home and call her maids to counsel.

Juliana took her leave of the company very gravely, as if not much delighted with her father's raillery. Leonora happened to be by, and heard all that passed; she was ready to swoon, and found herself seized with a more violent passion than ever for Aurelian. Now, upon her apprehensions of losing him, her active fancy had brought him before her with all the advantages imaginable, and though she had before found great tenderness in her inclination toward him, yet was she somewhat surprised to find she really loved him. She was so uneasy at what she had heard, that she thought it convenient to steal out of the presence and retire to her closet, to bemoan her unhappy helpless condition.

Our two cavalier lovers had racked their invention till it was quite disabled, and could not make discovery of one contrivance more for their relief. Both sat silent, each depending upon his friend, and still expecting when t'other should speak. Night came upon them while they sat thus thoughtless, or rather drowned in thought; but a servant bringing lights into the room awakened them. And Hippolito's speech, ushered by a profound sigh, broke silence. "Well!" said he, "what must we do, Aurelian?" "We must suffer," replied Aurelian faintly. When, immediately raising his voice, he cried out, "Oh, ye unequal Powers, why do ye urge us to desire what ye doom us to forbear? Give us a will to choose, then curb us with a duty to restrain that choice! Cruel father, will nothing else

suffice! Am I to be the sacrifice to expiate your offences past; past ere I was born? Were I to lose my life, I'd gladly seal your reconcilement with my blood. But, oh my soul is free, you have no title to my immortal being, that has existence independent of your power. And must I lose my love, the extract of that being, the joy, light, life, and darling of my soul? No, I'll own my flame, and plead my title too. —— But hold, wretched Aurelian, hold, whither does thy passion hurry thee? Alas! the cruel fair Incognita loves thee not! She knows not of thy love! If she did, what merit hast thou to pretend? —— Only love. —— Excess of love. And all the world has that. All that have seen her. Yet I had only seen her once, and in that once I loved above the world; nay, loved beyond myself, such vigorous flame, so strong, so quick she darted at my breast; it must rebound, and by reflection, warm herself. Ah! welcome thought, lovely deluding fancy, hang still upon my soul, let me but think that once she loves, and perish my despair."

Here a sudden stop gave a period also to Hippolito's expectation, and he hoped now that his friend had given his passion so free a vent, he might recollect and bethink himself of what was convenient to be done; but Aurelian, as if he had mustered up all his spirits purely to acquit himself of that passionate harangue, stood mute and insensible like an alarum clock, that had spent all its force in one violent emotion. Hippolito shook him by the arm to rouse him from his lethargy, when his lackey coming into the room out of breath, told him there was a coach just stopped at the door, but he did not take time to see who came in it. Aurelian concluded immediately it was his father in quest of him; and without saying any more to Hippolito than that he was ruined if discovered, took his sword and slipped down a back pair of stairs into the garden, from whence he conveyed himself into the street. Hippolito had not bethought himself what to do, before he perceived a lady come into the chamber close-veiled, and make toward him. At the first appearance of a woman, his imagination flattered him with a thought of Leonora; but that was quickly over upon nearer approach to the lady, who had much the advantage in stature of his mistress. He very civilly accosted her, and asked, if he were the person to whom the honor of that visit was intended. She said her business was with Don Hippolito di Saviolina, to whom she had matter of concern to import, and which required haste. He had like to have told her that he was the man, but by good chance reflecting upon his friend's adventure who had taken his name, he made answer that he believed Don Hippolito not far off, and if she had a moment's patience he would enquire for him.

He went out, leaving the lady in the room, and made search all round the house and garden for Aurelian, but to no purpose. The lady, impatient of his long stay, took a pen and ink and some paper which she found upon the table, and had just made an end of her letter, when hearing a

noise of more than one coming up-stairs, she concluded his friend had found him, and that her letter would be to no purpose, so tore it in pieces, which she repented, when, turning about, she found her mistake, and beheld Don Fabio and the Marquess of Viterbo just entering at the door. She gave a shriek at the surprise of their appearance, which much troubled the old gentlemen, and made them retire in confusion for putting a gentlewoman into such a fright. The Marquess thinking they had been misinformed or had mistaken the lodgings, came forward again, and made an apology to the lady for their error; but she making no reply, walked directly by him down-stairs and went into her coach, which hurried her away as speedily as the horses were able to draw.

The Dons were at a loss what to think when, Hippolito coming into the room to give the lady an account of his errand, was no less astonished to find she was departed, and had left two old Signiors in her stead. He knew Don Fabio's face, for Aurelian had shown him his father at the tilting; but being confident he was not known to him, he ventured to ask him concerning a lady whom just now he had left in that chamber. Don Fabio told him she was just gone down, and doubted they had been guilty of a mistake in coming to enquire for a couple of gentlemen whom they were informed were lodged in that house; he begged his pardon if he had any relation to that lady, and desired to know if he could give them any account of the persons they sought for. Hippolito made answer, he was a stranger in the place, and only a servant to that lady whom they had disturbed, and whom he must go and seek out. And in this perplexity he left them, going again in search of Aurelian, to inform him of what had passed.

The old gentlemen at last meeting with a servant of the house, were directed to Signior Claudio's chamber, where they were no sooner entered but Aurelian came into the house. A servant who had skulked for him by Hippolito's order, followed him up into the chamber, and told him who was with Claudio then making enquiry for him. He thought that to be no place for him, since Claudio must needs discover all the truth to his father; wherefore he left directions with the servant where Hippolito should meet him in the morning. As he was going out of the room he espied the torn paper which the lady had thrown upon the floor: the first piece he took up had Incognita written upon it; the sight of which so alarmed him, he scarce knew what he was about; but hearing a noise of a door opening overhead, with as much care as was consistent with the haste he was then in, he gathered up the scattered pieces of paper, and betook himself to a ramble.

Coming by a light which hung at the corner of a street, he joined the torn papers and collected thus much, that his Incognita had written the note, and earnestly desired him (if there were any reality in what he pretended to her) to meet her at twelve o'clock that night at a convent

gate; but unluckily the bit of paper which should have mentioned what convent, was broken off and lost.

Here was a large subject for Aurelian's passion, which he did not spare to pour forth in abundance of curses on his stars. So earnest was he in the contemplation of his misfortunes, that he walked on unwittingly; till at length a silence (and such as was only to be found in that part of the town whither his unguided steps had carried him) surprised his attention. I say, a profound silence roused him from his thought; and a clap of thunder could have done no more.

Now because it is possible this at some time or other may happen to be read by some malicious or ignorant person, (no reflection upon the present reader,) who will not admit or does not understand that silence should make a man start, and have the same effect in provoking his attention with its opposite noise; I will illustrate this matter, to such a diminutive critic by a parallel instance of light; which, though it does chiefly entertain the eyes and is indeed the prime object of the sight, yet should it immediately cease, to have a man left in the dark by a sudden deficiency of it, would make him stare with his eyes, and though he could not see, endeavor to look about him. Why, just thus did it fare with our adventurer; who seeming to have wandered both into the dominions of silence and of night, began to have some tender for his own safety, and would willingly have groped his way back again; when he heard a voice, as from a person whose breath had been stopped by some forcible oppression, and just then, by a violent effort, was broke through the restraint. — "Yet — Yet" — (again replied the voice, still struggling for air,) "Forbear — and I'll forgive what's past — I have done nothing yet that needs a pardon," (says another) "and what is to come, will admit of none."

Here the Person who seemed to be the oppressed, made several attempts to speak, but they were only inarticulate sounds, being all interrupted and choked in their passage.

Aurelian was sufficiently astonished, and would have crept nearer to the place whence he guessed the voice to come; but he was got among the ruins of an old monastery, and could not stir so silently, but some loose stones he met with made a rumbling. The noise alarmed both parties; and as it gave comfort to the one, it so terrified t'other, that he could not hinder the oppressed from calling for help. Aurelian fancied it was a woman's voice, and immediately drawing his sword, demanded what was the matter. He was answered with the appearance of a man, who had opened a dark lantern which he had by him, and came toward him with a pistol in his hand, ready cocked.

Aurelian seeing the irresistible advantage his adversary had over him, would fain have retired; and, by the greatest Providence in the world, going backwards fell down over some loose stones that lay in his way, just in that instant of time when the villain fired his pistol, who, seeing him

fall, concluded he had shot him. The cries of the afflicted person were redoubled at the tragical sight, which made the murderer, drawing a poniard, to threaten him, that the next murmur should be his last. Aurelian, who was scarce assured that he was unhurt, got softly up; and coming near enough to perceive the violence that was used to stop the injured man's mouth; (for now he saw plainly it was a man) cried out: "Turn, villain, and look upon thy death!" — The fellow, amazed at the voice, turned about to have snatched up the lantern from the ground, either to have given light only to himself, or to have put out the candle that he might have made his escape; but which of the two he designed, nobody could tell but himself: and if the reader have a curiosity to know, he must blame Aurelian; who, thinking there could be no foul play offered to such a villain, ran him immediately through the heart, so that he dropped down dead at his feet, without speaking a word. He would have seen who the person was he had thus happily delivered, but the dead body had fallen upon the lantern, which put out the candle. However, coming up toward him, he asked him how he did, and bid him be of good heart. He was answered with nothing but prayers, blessings and thanks, called a thousand deliverers, good geniuses and guardian angels. And the rescued would certainly have gone upon his knees to have worshipped him, had he not been bound hand and foot; which Aurelian understanding, groped for the knots, and either untied them or cut them asunder; but 'tis more probable the latter, because more expeditious.

They took little heed what became of the body which they left behind them, and Aurelian was conducted from out the ruins by the hand of him he had delivered. By a faint light issuing from the just rising moon, he could discern that it was a youth; but coming into a more frequented part of the town where several lights were hung out, he was amazed at the extreme beauty which appeared in his face, though a little pale and disordered with his late fright. Aurelian longed to hear the story of so odd an adventure, and entreated his charge to tell it him by the way; but he desired him to forbear till they were come into some house or other, where he might rest and recover his tired spirits, for yet he was so faint he was unable to look up. Aurelian thought these last words were delivered in a voice whose accent was not new to him. That thought made him look earnestly in the youth's face, which he now was sure he had somewhere seen before, and thereupon asked him if he had never been at Siena? That question made the young gentleman look up, and something of a joy appeared in his countenance, which yet he endeavored to smother; so praying Aurelian to conduct him to his lodging, he promised him that as soon as they should come thither, he would acquaint him with anything he desired to know. Aurelian would rather have gone anywhere else than to his own lodging; but being so very late, he was at a loss, and so forced to be contented.

As soon as they were come into his chamber and that lights were brought them and the servant dismissed, the paleness which so visibly before had usurped the sweet countenance of the afflicted youth vanished, and gave place to a more lively flood of crimson, which with a modest heat glowed freshly on his cheeks. Aurelian waited with a pleasing admiration the discovery promised him, when the youth still struggling with his resolution, with a timorous haste pulled off a peruke which had concealed the most beautiful abundance of hair that ever graced one female head; those dishevelled spreading tresses as at first they made a discovery of, so at last they served for a veil to the modest lovely blushes of the fair Incognita; for she it was and none other. But Oh! the inexpressible, inconceivable joy and amazement of Aurelian! As soon as he durst venture to think, he concluded it to be all vision and never doubted so much of anything in his life as of his being then awake. But she taking him by the hand and desiring him to sit down by her, partly convinced him of the reality of her presence.

"This is the second time, Don Hippolito," said she to him, "that I have been here this night. What the occasion was of my seeking you out, and how by miracle you preserved me, would add too much to the surprise I perceive you to be already in, should I tell you. Nor will I make any further discovery till I know what censure you pass upon the confidence which I have put in you, and the strange circumstances in which you find me at this time. I am sensible they are such that I shall not blame your severest conjectures; but I hope to convince you, when you shall hear what I have to say in justification of my virtue."

"Justification!" cried Aurelian, "what infidel dares doubt it!" Then kneeling down, and taking her hand, "Ah, Madam," says he, "would Heaven would no other ways look upon, than I behold your perfections — Wrong not your creature with a thought, he can be guilty of that horrid impiety as once to doubt your virtue — Heavens!" cried he, starting up, "am I so really blessed to see you once again! May I trust my sight? — Or does my fancy now only more strongly work? For still I did preserve your image in my heart, and you were ever present to my dearest thoughts."

"Enough, Hippolito, enough of rapture," said she, "you cannot much accuse me of ingratitude, for you see I have not been unmindful of you; but moderate your joy till I have told you my condition, and if for my sake you are raised to this delight, it is not of a long continuance."

At that, as Aurelian tells the story, a sigh diffused a mournful sweetness through the air, and liquid grief fell gently from her eyes, triumphant sadness sat upon her brow, and even sorrow seemed delighted with the conquest he had made. See what a change Aurelian felt! His heart bled tears and trembled in his breast; sighs struggling for a vent had choked each other's passage up; his floods of joys were all suppressed; cold doubts

and fears had chilled 'em with a sudden frost, and he was troubled to excess; yet knew not why. Well, the learned say it was sympathy; and I am always of the opinion with the learned, if they speak first!

After a world of condolence had passed between them, he prevailed with her to tell him her story. So having put all her sighs into one great sigh, she discharged herself of 'em all at once, and formed the relation you are just about to read:

"Having been in my infancy contracted to a man I could never endure, and now by my parents being likely to be forced to marry him, is in short, the great occasion of my grief. I fancied," continued she, "something so generous in your countenance and uncommon in your behavior while you were diverting yourself and rallying me with expressions of gallantry at the ball, as induced me to hold conference with you. I now freely confess to you, out of design, that if things should happen as I then feared and as now they are come to pass, I might rely upon your assistance in a matter of concern; and in which I would sooner choose to depend upon a generous stranger, than any acquaintance I have. What mirth and freedom I then put on were, I can assure you, far distant from my heart; but I did violence to myself out of complaisance to your temper. — I knew you at the tilting, and wished you might come off as you did; though I do not doubt but you would have had as good success had it been opposite to my inclinations. — Not to detain you by too tedious a relation, every day my friends urged me to the match they had agreed upon for me, before I was capable of consenting. At last their importunities grew to that degree that I found I must either consent, which would make me miserable, or be miserable by perpetually enduring to be baited by my father, brother and other relations. I resolved yesterday, on a sudden, to give firm faith to the opinion I had conceived of you; and accordingly came in the evening to request your assistance in delivering me from my tormentors, by a safe and private conveyance of me to a monastery about four leagues hence, where I have an aunt who would receive me, and is the only relation I have averse to the match. I was surprised at the appearance of some company I did not expect at your lodgings; which made me in haste tear a paper which I had written to you with directions where to find me, and get speedily away in my coach to an old servant's house, whom I acquainted with my purpose. By my order she provided me of this habit which I now wear; I ventured to trust myself with her brother, and resolved to go under his conduct to the monastery; he proved to be a villain, and pretending to take me a short and private way to the place where he was to take up a hackney coach (for that which I came in was broke somewhere or other, with the haste it made to carry me from your lodging) led me into an old ruined monastery, where it pleased Heaven, by what accident I know not, to direct you. I need not tell you how you saved my life and my honor, by revenging me with the death of my per-

fidious guide. This is the sum of my present condition, bating the apprehensions I am in of being taken by some of my relations, and forced to a thing so quite contrary to my inclinations."

Aurelian was confounded at the relation she had made, and began to fear his own estate to be more desperate than ever he had imagined. He made her a very passionate and eloquent speech in behalf of himself (much better than I intend to insert here), and expressed a mighty concern that she should look upon his ardent affection to be only raillery or gallantry. He was very free of his oaths to confirm the truth of what he pretended, nor I believe did she doubt it, or at least was unwilling so to do. For I would caution the reader, by-the-by, not to believe every word which she told him, nor that admirable sorrow which she counterfeited to be accurately true. It was indeed truth so cunningly intermingled with fiction that it required no less wit and presence of mind than she was endowed with, so to acquit herself on the sudden. She had entrusted herself indeed with a fellow who proved a villain, to conduct her to a monastery; but one which was in the town, and where she intended only to lie concealed for his sake — as the reader shall understand ere long; For we have another discovery to make to him, if he have not found it out of himself already.

After Aurelian had said what he was able upon the subject in hand, with a mournful tone and dejected look, he demanded his doom. She asked him if he would endeavor to convey her to the monastery she had told him of? "Your commands, Madam," replied he, "are sacred to me; and were they to lay down my life, I would obey them." With that he would have gone out of the room, to have given order for his horses to be got ready immediately; but with a countenance so full of sorrow as moved compassion in the tender-hearted Incognita. "Stay a little, Don Hippolito," said she, "I fear I shall not be able to undergo the fatigue of a journey this night. — Stay and give me your advice how I shall conceal myself if I continue to-morrow in this town." Aurelian could have satisfied her she was not then in a place to avoid discovery; but he must also have told her then the reason of it, *viz.* who he was, and who were in quest of him, which he did not think convenient to declare till necessity should urge him; for he feared lest her knowledge of those designs which were in agitation between him and Juliana, might deter her more from giving her consent. At last he resolved to try his utmost persuasions to gain her, and told her accordingly he was afraid she would be disturbed there in the morning; and he knew no other way (if she had not as great an aversion for him as the man whom she now endeavored to avoid) than by making him happy to make herself secure. He demonstrated to her that the disobligation to her parents would be greater by going to a monastery, since it was only to avoid a choice which they had made for her, and which she could not have so just a pretence to do, till she had made one for herself.

A world of other arguments he used, which she contradicted as long as she was able, or at least willing. At last she told him she would consult her pillow, and in the morning conclude what was fit to be done. He thought it convenient to leave her to her rest, and having locked her up in his room, went himself to repose upon a pallet by Signior Claudio.

In the meantime it may be convenient to enquire what became of Hippolito. He had wandered much in pursuit of Aurelian, though Leonora equally took up his thoughts. He was reflecting upon the oddness and extravagance of his circumstances, the continuation of which had doubtless created in him a great uneasiness, when it was interrupted with the noise of opening the gates of the convent of St. Lawrence, whither he was arrived sooner than he thought for, being the place Aurelian had appointed by the lackey to meet him in. He wondered to see the gates opened at so unseasonable an hour, and went to enquire the reason of it from them who were employed; but they proved to be novices, and made him signs to go in, where he might meet with somebody allowed to answer him. He found the religious men all up, and tapers lighting everywhere. At last he followed a friar who was going into the garden, and asking him the cause of these preparations, he was answered That they were entreated to pray for the soul of a cavalier who was just departing or departed this life, and whom upon farther talk with him, he found to be the same Lorenzo so often mentioned. Don Mario, it seems, uncle to Lorenzo and father to Leonora, had a private door out of the garden belonging to his house into that of the convent, which door this father was now a going to open, that he and his family might come and offer up their orisons for the soul of their kinsman. Hippolito having informed himself of as much as he could ask without suspicion, took his leave of the friar, not a little joyful at the hopes he had by such unexpected means of seeing his beautiful Leonora. As soon as he was got at convenient distance from the friar, (who, 'tis like, thought he had returned into the convent to his devotion) he turned back through a close walk which led him with a little compass, to the same private door, where just before he had left the friar, who now he saw was gone, and the door open.

He went into Don Mario's garden, and walked round with much caution and circumspection; for the moon was then about to rise, and had already diffused a glimmering light, sufficient to distinguish a man from a tree. By computation now (which is a very remarkable circumstance) Hippolito entered this garden near upon the same instant, when Aurelian wandered into the old monastery and found his Incognita in distress. He was pretty well acquainted with the platform and sight of the garden; for he had formerly surveyed the outside, and knew what part to make to if he should be surprised and driven to a precipitate escape. He took his stand behind a well-grown bush of myrtle which, should the moon shine brighter than was required, had the advantage to be shaded by the indulgent boughs

of an ancient bay-tree. He was delighted with the choice he had made, for he found a hollow in the myrtle, as if purposely contrived for the reception of one person, who might undiscovered perceive all about him. He looked upon it as a good omen, that the tree consecrated to Venus was so propitious to him in his amorous distress. The consideration of that, together with the obligation he lay under to the Muses for sheltering him also with so large a crown of bays, had like to have set him a rhyming.

He was, to tell the truth, naturally addicted to madrigals, and we should undoubtedly have had a small desert of numbers to have picked and criticised upon, had he not been interrupted just upon his delivery; nay, after the preliminary sigh had made way for his utterance. But so was his fortune, Don Mario was coming towards the door at that very nick of time, where he met with a priest just out of breath, who told him that Lorenzo was just breathing his last, and desired to know if he would come and take his final leave before they were to administer the Extreme Unction. Don Mario, who had been at some difference with his nephew, now thought it his duty to be reconciled to him; so calling to Leonora, who was coming after him, he bid her go to her devotions in the chapel, and told her where he was going.

He went on with the priest, while Hippolito saw Leonora come forward, only accompanied by her woman. She was in an undress, and by reason of a melancholy visible in her face, more careless than usual in her attire, which he thought added as much as was possible to the abundance of her charms. He had not much time to contemplate this beauteous vision, for she soon passed into the garden of the convent, leaving him confounded with love, admiration, joy, hope, fear, and all the train of passions, which seize upon men in his condition, all at once. He was so teased with this variety of torment, that he never missed the two hours that had slipped away during his automachy and intestine conflict. Leonora's return settled his spirits, at least united them, and he had now no other thought but how he should present himself before her. When she, calling her woman, bid her bolt the garden door on the inside, that she might not be surprised by her father if he returned through the convent; which done, she ordered her to bring down her lute, and leave her to herself in the garden.

All this Hippolito saw and heard to his inexpressible content, yet had he much to do to smother his joy, and hinder it from taking a vent, which would have ruined the only opportunity of his life. Leonora withdrew into an arbor so near him, that he could distinctly hear her if she played or sang. Having tuned her lute, with a voice soft as the breath of angels, she flung to it this following air:

Ah! Whither, whither shall I fly,
A poor unhappy maid;

To hopeless love and misery
  By my own heart betray'd?
Not by Alexis' eyes undone,
Nor by his charming faithless tongue,
  Or any practis'd art;
Such real ills may hope a cure,
But the sad pains which I endure
  Proceed from fancied smart.

'Twas fancy gave Alexis charms,
  Ere I beheld his face:
Kind fancy (then) could fold our arms,
  And form a soft embrace.
But since I've seen the real swain,
And tried to fancy him again,
  I'm by my fancy taught,
Though 'tis a bliss no tongue can tell,
To have Alexis, yet 'tis hell
  To have him but in thought.

The song ended, grieved Hippolito that it was so soon ended; and in the ecstacy he was then rapt, I believe he would have been satisfied to have expired with it. He could not help flattering himself, (though at the same time he checked his own vanity,) that he was the person meant in the song. While he was indulging which thought, to his happy astonishment, he heard it encouraged by these words:

"Unhappy Leonora," said she, "how is thy poor unwary heart misled? Whither am I come? The false deluding lights of an imaginary flame have led me, a poor benighted victim, to a real fire. I burn and am consumed with hopeless love; those beams in whose soft temperate warmth I wantoned heretofore now flash destruction to my soul, my treacherous greedy eyes have sucked the glaring light; they have united all its rays and like a burning-glass, conveyed the pointed meteor to my heart —— Ah! Aurelian, how quickly hast thou conquered, and how quickly must thou forsake. —— Oh happy (to me unfortunately happy) Juliana! —— I am to be the subject of thy triumph. To thee Aurelian comes laden with the tribute of my heart and glories in the oblation of his broken vows. ——— What then, is Aurelian false! —— False! Alas, I know not what I say, How can he be false, or true, or anything to me? What promises did he e'er make, or I receive? Sure I dream, or I am mad, and fancy it to be love. Foolish girl, recall thy banished reason. —— Ah! would it were no more; would I could rave, sure that would give me ease, and rob me of the sense of pain; at least, among my wandering thoughts, I should at some time light upon Aurelian, and fancy him to be mine; kind madness would flatter my poor feeble wishes, and sometimes

tell me Aurelian is not lost —— not irrecoverably —— not for ever lost!"

Hippolito could hear no more, he had not room for half his transport. When Leonora perceived a man coming toward her, she fell a-trembling, and could not speak. Hippolito approached with reverence, as to a sacred shrine; when, coming near enough to see her consternation, he fell upon his knees.

"Behold, Oh adored Leonora," said he, "your ravished Aurelian, behold at your feet the happiest of men. Be not disturbed at my appearance, but think that Heaven conducted me to hear my bliss pronounced by that dear mouth alone, whose breath could fill me with new life."

Here he would have come nearer, but Leonora (scarce come to herself) was getting up in haste to have gone away. He catched her hand, and with all the endearments of love and transport, pressed her stay; she was a long time in great confusion. At last, with many blushes, she entreated him to let her go where she might hide her guilty head, and not expose her shame before his eyes, since his ears had been sufficient witnesses of her crime. He begged pardon for his treachery in overhearing, and confessed it to be a crime he had now repeated. With a thousand submissions, entreaties, prayers, praises, blessings and passionate expressions he wrought upon her to stay and hear him. Here Hippolito made use of his rhetoric, and it proved prevailing. 'Twere tedious to tell the many ingenious arguments he used, with all her nice distinctions and objections. In short, he convinced her of his passion, represented to her the necessity they were under of being speedy in their resolves: that his father (for still he was Aurelian) would undoubtedly find him in the morning, and then it would be too late to repent. She on the other hand, knew it was in vain to deny a passion which he had heard her so frankly own; (and no doubt was very glad it was past and done) besides apprehending the danger of delay and having some little jealousies and fears of what effect might be produced between the commands of his father and the beauties of Juliana. After some decent denials, she consented to be conducted by him through the garden into the convent, where she would prevail with her confessor to marry them. He was a scrupulous old father whom they had to deal withal, insomuch that ere they had persuaded him, Don Mario was returned by the way of his own house where, missing his daughter, and her woman not being able to give any farther account of her than that she left her in the garden, he concluded she was gone again to her devotions, and indeed he found her in the chapel upon her knees with Hippolito in her hand, receiving the father's benediction upon conclusion of the ceremony.

It would have asked a very skilful hand to have depicted to the life the faces of those three persons, at Don Mario's appearance. He that has seen some admirable piece of transmutation by a Gorgon's head may form to himself the most probable idea of the prototype. The old gentle-

man was himself in a sort of a wood, to find his daughter with a young fellow and a priest, but as yet he did not know the worst, till Hippolito and Leonora came, and kneeling at his feet, begged his forgiveness and blessing as his son and daughter. Don Mario, instead of that, fell into a most violent passion, and would undoubtedly have committed some extravagant action, had he not been restrained, more by the sanctity of the place than the persuasions of all the religious, who were now come about him. Leonora stirred not off her knees all this time, but continued begging of him that he would hear her.

"Ah! ungrateful and undutiful wretch," cried he, "how hast thou requited all my care and tenderness of thee? Now when I might have expected some return of comfort, to throw thyself away upon an unknown person and, for aught I know, a villain; to me I'm sure he is a villain, who has robbed me of my treasure, my darling joy, and all the future happiness of my life prevented. Go, go, thou now-to-be-forgotten Leonora, go and enjoy thy unprosperous choice; you who wanted not a father's counsel, cannot need, or else will slight his blessing."

These last words were spoken with so much passion and feeling concern that Leonora, moved with excess of grief, fainted at his feet, just as she had caught hold to embrace his knees. The old man would have shook her off, but compassion and fatherly affection came upon him in the midst of his resolve, and melted him into tears. He embraced his daughter in his arms and wept over her, while they endeavored to restore her senses.

Hippolito was in such concern he could not speak, but was busily employed in rubbing and chafing her temples; when she opening her eyes laid hold of his arm, and cried out —— "Oh, my Aurelian —— how unhappy have you made me!" With that she had again like to have fainted away, but he took her in his arms, and begged Don Mario to have some pity on his daughter, since by his severity she was reduced to that condition. The old man hearing his daughter name Aurelian, was a little revived, and began to hope things were in a pretty good condition. He was persuaded to comfort her, and having brought her wholly to herself, was content to hear her excuse, and in a little time was so far wrought upon as to beg Hippolito's pardon for the ill opinion he had conceived of him, and not long after gave his consent.

The night was spent in this conflict, and it was now clear day, when Don Mario conducting his new son and daughter through the garden, was met by some servants of the Marquess of Viterbo, who had been enquiring for Donna Leonora, to know if Juliana had lately been with her; for that she was missing from her father's house and no conjectures could be made of what might become of her. Don Mario and Leonora were surprised at the news, for he knew well enough of the match that was designed for Juliana; and having enquired where the Marquess was, it was told him that he was gone with Don Fabio and

Fabritio toward Aurelian's lodgings. Don Mario having assured the servants that Juliana had not been there, dismissed them, and advised with his son and daughter how they should undeceive the Marquess and Don Fabio in their expectations of Aurelian. Hippolito could oftentimes scarce forbear smiling at the old man's contrivances who was most deceived himself; he at length advised them to go all down together to his lodging, where he would present himself before his father, and ingenuously confess to him the truth, and he did not question his approving of his choice.

This was agreed to, and the coach made ready. While they were upon their way, Hippolito prayed heartily that his friend Aurelian might be at the lodging, to satisfy Don Mario and Leonora of his circumstances and quality, when he should be obliged to discover himself. His petitions were granted; for Don Fabio had beset the house long before his son was up or Incognita awake.

Upon the arrival of Don Mario and Hippolito, they heard a great noise and hubbub above stairs, which Don Mario concluded was occasioned by their not finding Aurelian, whom he thought he could give the best account of; so that it was not in Hippolito's power to dissuade him from going up before to prepare his father to receive and forgive him. While Hippolito and Leonora were left in the coach at the door, he made himself known to her, and begged her pardon a thousand times for continuing the deceit. She was under some concern at first to find she was still mistaken; but his behavior, and the reasons he gave, soon reconciled him to her; his person was altogether as agreeable, his estate and quality not at all inferior to Aurelian's; in the meantime, the true Aurelian who had seen his father, begged leave of him to withdraw for a moment; in which time he went into the chamber where his Incognita was dressing herself, by his design, in woman's apparel, while he was consulting with her how they should break the matter to his father; it happened that Don Mario came up-stairs where the Marquess and Don Fabio were; they undoubtedly concluded him mad, to hear him making apologies and excuses for Aurelian, whom, he told them, if they would promise to forgive, he would present before them immediately. The Marquess asked him if his daughter had lain with Leonora that night; he answered him with another question in behalf of Aurelian. In short, they could not understand one another, but each thought t'other beside himself. Don Mario was so concerned that they would not believe him, that he ran down-stairs and came to the door out of breath, desiring Hippolito that he would come into the house quickly, for that he could not persuade his father but that he had already seen and spoke to him. Hippolito by that understood that Aurelian was in the house; so taking Leonora by the hand, he followed Don Mario, who led him up into the dining-room, where they found Aurelian upon his knees, begging his father to forgive him, that he could not agree to the

choice he had made for him, since he had already disposed of himself, and that before he understood the designs he had for him, which was the reason that he had hitherto concealed himself. Don Fabio knew not how to answer him, but looked upon the Marquess, and the Marquess upon him, as if the cement had been cooled which was to have united their families.

All was silent, and Don Mario for his part took it to be all conjuration; he was coming forward to present Hippolito to them, when Aurelian spying his friend, started from his knees and ran to embrace him. "My dear Hippolito," said he, "what happy chance has brought you hither, just at my necessity?" Hippolito pointed to Don Mario and Leonora, and told him upon what terms he came. Don Mario was ready to run mad, hearing him called Hippolito, and went again to examine his daughter. While she was informing him of the truth, the Marquess's servants returned with the melancholy news that his daughter was nowhere to be found. While the Marquess and Don Fabritio were wondering at and lamenting the misfortune of her loss, Hippolito came towards Don Fabio and interceded for his son, since the lady perhaps had withdrawn herself out of an aversion to the match. Don Fabio, though very much incensed, yet forgot not the respect due to Hippolito's quality; and by his persuasion spoke to Aurelian, though with a stern look and angry voice, and asked him where he had disposed the cause of his disobedience, if he were worthy to see her or no; Aurelian made answer that he desired no more than for him to see her; and he did not doubt a consequence of his approbation and forgiveness. "Well," said Don Fabio, "you are very conceited of your own discretion, let us see this rarity." While Aurelian was gone in for Incognita, the Marquess of Viterbo and Don Fabritio were taking their leaves in great disorder for their loss and disappointment; but Don Fabio entreated their stay a moment longer till the return of his son. Aurelian led Incognita into the room veiled, who seeing some company there which he had not told her of, would have gone back again. But Don Fabio came bluntly forwards, and ere she was aware, lifted up her veil and beheld the fair Incognita, differing nothing from Juliana but in her name. This discovery was so extremely surprising and welcome, that either joy or amazement had tied up the tongues of the whole company. Aurelian here was most at a loss, for he knew not of his happiness; and that which all along prevented Juliana's confessing herself to him, was her knowing Hippolito (for whom she took him) to be Aurelian's friend, and she feared if he had known her, that he would never have consented to have deprived him of her. Juliana was the first that spoke, falling upon her knees to her father, who was not enough himself to take her up. Don Fabio ran to her, and awakened the Marquess, who then embraced her, but could not yet speak. Fabritio and Leonora strove who should first take her in their arms; for Aurelian, he was out of his wits for joy, and Juliana was not

much behind him, to see how happily their loves and duties were reconciled. Don Fabio embraced his son and forgave him. The Marquess and Fabritio gave Juliana into his hands, he received the blessing upon his knees; all were overjoyed, and Don Mario not a little proud at the discovery of his son-in-law, whom Aurelian did not fail to set forth with all the ardent zeal and eloquence of friendship. Juliana and Leonora had pleasant discourse about their unknown and mistaken rivalship, and it was the subject of a great deal of mirth to hear Juliana relate the several contrivances which she had to avoid Aurelian for the sake of Hippolito.

Having diverted themselves with many remarks upon the pleasing surprise, they all thought it proper to attend upon the Great Duke that morning at the Palace, and to acquaint him with the novelty of what had passed; while, by the way, the young couples entertained the company with the relation of several particulars of their three days' adventures.

MARIA EDGEWORTH

(1767–1849)

MARIA EDGEWORTH was born near Reading in 1747. Much of her early training was received under her father, who was a writer. In 1800 she published her first novel. *Castle Rackrent.* She continued writing novels and stories for the next thirty-five years, Nearly all her best work is concerned with Irish scenes and the delineation of Irish character. One of her finest books is a collection called *Popular Tales,* from which the story reprinted below is selected.

Rosanna is reprinted from a late revised edition of the *Popular Tales,* which first appeared in 1812.

ROSANNA

CHAPTER I

THERE are two sorts of content: one is connected with exertion, the other with habits of indolence; the first is a virtue, the second a vice. Examples of both may be found in abundance in Ireland. There you may sometimes see a man in sound health submitting day after day to evils which a few hours' labour would remedy; and you are provoked to hear him say, 'It will do well enough for me. Didn't it do for my father before me? I can make a shift with things for my time: anyhow, I'm content.'

This kind of content is indeed the bane of industry. But instances of a different sort may be found, in various of the Irish peasantry. Amongst them we may behold men struggling with adversity with all the strongest powers of mind and body; and supporting irremediable evils with a degree of cheerful fortitude which must excite at once our pity and admiration.

In a pleasant village in the province of Leinster there lives a family of the name of Gray. Whether or not they are any way related to Old Robin Gray, history does not determine; but it is very possible that they are, because they came, it is said, originally from the north of Ireland, and one of the sons is actually called Robin. Leaving this point, however, in the obscurity which involves the early history of the most ancient and illustrious families, we proceed to less disputable and perhaps more useful facts. It is well known, that is by all his neighbours, that farmer

Gray began life with no very encouraging prospects: he was the youngest of a large family, and the portion of his father's property that fell to his share was but just sufficient to maintain his wife and three children. At his father's death, he had but £100 in ready money, and he was obliged to go into a poor mud-walled cabin, facing the door of which there was a green pool of stagnant water; and before the window, of one pane, a dunghill that, reaching to the thatch of the roof, shut out the light, and filled the house with the most noisome smell. The ground sloped towards the house door; so that in rainy weather, when the pond was full, the kitchen was overflowed; and at all times the floor was so damp and soft, that the print of the nails of brogues was left in it wherever the wearer set down his foot. To be sure these nail-marks could scarcely be seen, except just near the door or where the light of the fire immediately shone; because, elsewhere, the smoke was so thick, that the pig might have been within a foot of you without your seeing him. The former inhabitants of this mansion had, it seems, been content without a chimney: and, indeed, almost without a roof; the couples and purlins of the roof, having once given way, had never been repaired, and swagged down by the weight of the thatch, so that the ends threatened the wigs of the unwary.

The prospect without doors was scarcely more encouraging to our hero than the scene within: the farm consisted of about forty acres; and the fences of the grazing-land were so bad, that the neighbours' cattle took possession of it frequently by day, and always by night. The tillage-ground had been so ill managed by his predecessor, that the land was what is called quite out of heart.

If farmer Gray had also been out of heart, he and his family might at this hour have been beggars. His situation was thought desperate by many of his neighbours; and, a few days after his father's decease, many came to condole with him. Amongst the rest was 'easy Simon'; or, as some called him, 'soft Simon,' on account of his unresisting disposition, and contented, or, as we should rather name it, reckless temper. He was a sort of a half or a half-quarter gentleman, had a small patrimony of a hundred or a hundred and fifty pounds a year, a place in the excise worth fifty more, and a mill, which might have been worth another hundred annually, had it not been suffered to stand still for many a year.

'Wheugh! Wheugh! What a bustle we are in! and what a world of trouble is here!' cried Simon, when he came to Gray's house, and found him on the ladder taking off the decayed thatch; whilst one of his sons, a lad of about fourteen, was hard at work filling a cart from the dunghill which blockaded the window. His youngest son, a boy of twelve, with a face and neck red with heat, was making a drain to carry off the water from the green pond; and Rose, the sister, a girl of ten years old, was collecting the ducks, which her mother was going to carry to her landlord's to sell.

'Wheugh! Wheugh! Wheugh! Why, what a world of bustle and trouble is here! Troth, Jemmy Gray, you're in a bad way, sure enough! Poor cratur! Poor cratur.'

'No man,' replied Gray, 'deserves to be called poor, that has his health and the use of his limbs. Besides,' continued he, 'have not I a good wife and good children: and, with those blessings, has not a man sufficient reason to be content?'

'Ay, to be sure: that's the only way to get through this world,' said Simon; 'whatever comes, just to take it easy, and be content. Content and a warm chimney-corner is all in all, according to my notion.'

'Yes, Simon,' said Gray, laughing; 'but your kind of content would never do for me. Content, that sits down in the chimney-corner, and does nothing but smoke his pipe, will soon have the house about his ears; and then what will become of Content?'

'Time enough to think of that when it comes,' said Simon: 'fretting never propped a house yet; and if it did, I would rather see it fall than fret.'

'But could not you prop the house,' said Gray, 'without fretting?'

'Is it by putting my shoulders to it?' said Simon. 'My shoulders have never been used to hard work, and don't like it anyway. As long as I can eat, drink, and sleep, and have a coat to my back, what matter for the rest? Let the world go as it will, I'm content. Shoo! Shoo! The button is off the neck of this greatcoat of mine, and how *will* I keep it on? A pin sure will do as well as a button, and better. Mrs. Gray, or Miss Rose, I'll thank you kindly for a pin.'

He stuck the pin in the place of the button, to fasten the greatcoat round his throat, and walked off: it pricked his chin about a dozen times before the day was over; but he forgot the next day, and the next, and the next, to have the button sewed on. He was content to make shift, as he called it, with the pin. This is precisely the species of content which leads to beggary.

Not such the temper of our friend Gray. Not an inconvenience that he could remedy, by industry or ingenuity, was he content to endure; but necessary evils he bore with unshaken patience and fortitude. His house was soon new roofed and new thatched; the dunghill was removed, and spread over that part of his land which most wanted manure; the putrescent water of the standing pool was drained off, and fertilised a meadow; and the kitchen was never again overflowed in rainy weather, because the labour of half a day made a narrow trench which carried off the water. The prints of the shoe-nails were no longer visible in the floor; for the two boys trod dry mill seeds into the clay, and beat the floor well, till they rendered it quite hard and even. The rooms also were cleared of smoke, for Gray built a chimney; and the kitchen window, which had formerly been stuffed up, when the wind blew too hard, with an old or

new hat, was glazed. There was now light in the house. Light! the great friend of cleanliness and order. The pig could now no longer walk in and out, unseen and unreproved; he ceased to be an inmate of the kitchen.

The kitchen was indeed so altered from what it had been during the reign of the last master, that he did not know it again. It was not in the least like a pig-sty. The walls were whitewashed; and shelves were put up, on which clean wooden and pewter utensils were ranged. There were no heaps of forlorn rubbish in the corners of the room; nor even an old basket, or a blanket, or a cloak, or a greatcoat thrown down just for a minute, out of the girl's way. No: Rose was a girl who always put everything in its place; and she found it almost as easy to hang a coat, or a cloak, upon a peg, as to throw it down on the floor. She thought it as convenient to put the basket and turf-kish out of her way, when her brothers had brought in the potatoes and fuel, as to let them lie in the middle of the kitchen, to be stumbled over by herself and her mother, or to be gnawed and clawed by a cat and dog. These may seem trifles unworthy the notice of the historian; but trifles such as these contribute much to the comfort of a poor family, and therefore deserve a place in their simple annals.

It was a matter of surprise and censure to some of farmer Gray's neighbours, that he began by laying out it could not be less than ten pounds (a great sum for him!) on his house and garden at the first setting out; when, to be sure, the land would have paid him better if the money had been laid out there. And why could not he make a shift to live on in the old cabin, for a while, as others had done before his time well enough? A poor man should be *contented* with a poor house. Where was the use, said they, of laying out the good ready penny in a way that would bring nothing in?

Farmer Gray calculated that he could not have laid out his money to better advantage; for by these ten pounds he had probably saved his wife, his children, and himself, from a putrid fever, or from the rheumatism. The former inhabitants of this house, who had been content to live with the dunghill close to the window, and the green pool overflowing the kitchen, and the sharp wind blowing in through the broken panes, had in the course of a few years lost their health. The father of the family had been crippled by the rheumatism, two children died of the fever, and the mother had such an inflammation in her eyes that she could not see to work, spin, or do anything. Now the whole that was lost by the family sickness, the doctor's bill, and the burying of the two children, all together, came in three years to nearly three times ten pounds. Therefore Mr. Gray was, if we only consider money, a very prudent man. What could he or anybody do without health? Money is not the first thing to be thought of in this world; for there are many things that money cannot buy, and health is one of them. 'Health can make money, but money cannot make health,' said our wise farmer. 'And then, for the value of a

few shillings, say pounds, we have light to see what we are doing, and shelves, and a press to hold our clothes in. Why now, this will be all so much saved to us, by and by; for the clothes will last the longer, and the things about us will not go to wreck; and when I and the boys can come home after our day's work to a house like this, we may be content.'

Having thus ensured, as far as it was in his power, health, cleanliness, and comfort in his house, our hero and his sons turned their attention to the farm. They set about to repair all the fences; for the boys, though they were young, were able to help their father in the farm: they were willing to work, and happy to work with him. John, the eldest lad, could set potatoes, and Robin was able to hold the plough: so that Gray did not hire any servant-boy to help him; nor did Mrs. Gray hire a maid. 'Rose and I,' said she, 'can manage very well to look after the two cows, and milk them, and make the butter, and get something too by our spinning. We must do without servants, and may be happy and content to serve ourselves.

'Times will grow better; that is, we shall make them better every year: we must have the roughest first,' said Gray.

The first year, to be sure, it was rough enough; and, do what they could, they could not do more than make the rent of the farm, which rent amounted to forty pounds. The landlord was a Mr. Hopkins, agent to a gentleman who resided in England. Mr. Hopkins insisted upon having the rent paid up to the day, and so it was. Gray contented himself by thinking that this was perhaps for the best. 'When the rent is once paid,' said he, 'it cannot be called for again, and I am in no man's power; that's a great comfort. To be sure, if the half-year's rent was left in my hands for a few months, it might have been of service: but it is better not to be under an obligation to such a man as Mr. Hopkins, who would make us pay for it in some shape or other, when we least expected it.'

Mr. Hopkins was what is called in Ireland a middleman; one that takes land from great proprietors, to set it again at an advanced, and often an exorbitant, price, to the poor. Gray had his land at a fair rent, because it was not from Mr. Hopkins his father had taken the lease, but from the gentleman to whom this man was agent. Mr. Hopkins designed to buy the land which Gray farmed, and he therefore wished to make it appear as unprofitable as possible to his landlord, who, living in England, knew but little of his own estate. 'If these Grays don't pay the rent,' said he to his driver, 'pound their cattle, and sell at the end of eight days. If they break and run away, I shall have the land clear, and may make a compliment of it to tenants and friends of my own, after it comes into my hands.'

He was rather disappointed when the rent was paid to the day. 'But,' said he, 'it won't be so next year; the man is laying out his money on the ground, on draining and fencing, and that won't pay suddenly. We'll leave

the rent in his hands for a year or so, and bring down an ejectment upon him, if he once gets into our power, as he surely will. Then, all that he has done to the house will be so much in my way. What a fool he was to lay out his money so!'

It happened, however, that the money which Gray had laid out in making his house comfortable and neat was of the greatest advantage to him, and at a time and in a way which he least expected. His cottage was within sight of the highroad, that led to a town from which it was about a mile distant. A regiment of English arrived, to be quartered in the town; and the wives of some of the soldiers came a few hours after their husbands. One of these women, a sergeant's wife, was taken suddenly in labour, before they reached the town; and the soldier who conducted the baggage-cart in which she was drew up to the first amongst a row of miserable cabins that were by the roadside, to ask the people if they would give her lodging: but the sick woman was shocked at the sight of the smoke and dirt of this cabin, and begged to be carried on to the neat whitewashed cottage that she saw at a little distance. This was Gray's house.

His wife received the stranger with the greatest kindness and hospitality; she was able to offer her a neat bed, and a room that was perfectly dry and clean. The sergeant's wife was brought to bed soon after her arrival, and remained with Mrs. Gray till she recovered her strength. She was grateful for the kindness that was shown to her by Mrs. Gray; and so was her husband the sergeant. He came one evening to the cottage, and in his blunt English fashion said, 'Mr. Gray, you know I, or my wife, which is the same thing, have cause to be obliged to you, or your wife, which comes also to the same thing: now one good turn deserves another. Our colonel has ordered me, I being quarter-master, to sell off by auction some of the cast horses belonging to the regiment: now I have bought in the best for a trifle, and have brought him here, with me, to beg you'll accept of him, by way of some sort of a return for the civilities you and your wife, that being, as I said, the same thing, showed me and mine.'

Gray replied he was obliged to him for this offer of the horse, but that he could not think of accepting it; that he was very glad his wife had been able to show any kindness or hospitality to a stranger; but that, as they did not keep a public-house, they could not take anything in the way of payment.

The sergeant was more and more pleased by farmer Gray's generosity. 'Well,' said he, 'I heard, before I came to Ireland, that the Irish were the most hospitable people on the face of the earth; and so I find it come true, and I shall always say so, wherever I'm quartered hereafter. And now do pray answer me, is there any the least thing I can ever do to oblige you? for, if the truth must be told of me, I don't like to lie under an obligation, any more than another, where I can help it.'

'To show you that I do not want to lay you under one,' said Gray, 'I'll tell you how you can do as much for me, and ten times as much, as I have done for you; and this without hurting yourself or any of your employers a penny.'

'Say how, and it shall be done.'

'By letting me have the dung of the barracks, which will make my land and me rich, without making you poorer; for I'll give you the fair price, whatever it is. I don't ask you to wrong your employers of a farthing.'

The sergeant promised this should be done, and rejoiced that he had found some means of serving his friend. Gray covered ten acres with the manure brought from the barracks; and the next year these acres were in excellent heart. This was sufficient for the grazing of ten cows: he had three, and he bought seven more; and with what remained of his hundred pounds, after paying for the cows, he built a shed and a cow-house. His wife, and daughter Rose, who was now about fourteen, were excellent managers of the dairy. They made, by butter and butter-milk, about four pounds each cow within the year. The butter they salted and took to market at the neighbouring town; the butter-milk they sold to the country people, who, according to the custom of the neighbourhood, came to the house for it.

Besides this, they reared five calves, which, at a year old, they sold for fifteen guineas and a half. The dairy did not, however, employ all the time of this industrious mother and daughter; they had time for spinning, and by this cleared six guineas. They also made some little matter by poultry; but that was only during the first year: afterwards Mr. Hopkins sent notice that they must pay all the *duty-fowl*, and *duty-geese*, and *turkeys* charged in the lease, or compound with him by paying two guineas a year. This gentleman had many methods of squeezing money out of poor tenants; and he was not inclined to spare the Grays, whose farm he now more than ever wished to possess, because its value had been considerably increased by the judicious industry of the farmer and his sons.

Young as they were, both farmer Gray's sons had a share in these improvements. The eldest had drained a small field, which used to be called the rushy field from its having been quite covered with rushes. Now there was not a rush to be found upon it, and his father gave him the profits of the field, and said that it should be called by his name. Robin, the youngest son, had, by his father's advice, tried a little experiment, which many of his neighbours ridiculed at first, and admired at last. The spring, which used to supply the duck-pond that often flooded the house, was at the head of a meadow, that sloped with a fall sufficient to let the water run off. Robin flooded the meadow at the proper season of the year, and it produced afterwards a crop such as never had been seen there before. His father called this meadow Robin's meadow, and gave him the value of the hay that was made upon it.

'Now, my dear boys,' said this good father, 'you have made a few guineas for yourselves; and here are a few more for you, all that I can spare: let us see what you can do with this money. I shall take a pride in seeing you get forward by your own industry and cleverness; I don't want you to slave for me all your best days; but shall always be ready, as a father should be, to give you a helping hand.'

The sons had scarcely a word in answer to this, for their hearts were full; but that night, when they were by themselves, one said to the other, 'Brother, did you see Jack Reel's letter to his father? They say he has sent home ten guineas to him. Is there any truth in it, think you?'

'Yes; I saw the letter, and a kinder never was written from son to father. The ten guineas I saw paid into the old man's hand; and, at that same minute, I wished it was I that was doing the same by my own father.'

'That was just what I was thinking of when I asked you if you saw the letter. Why, Jack Reel had nothing, when he went abroad with the army to Egypt, last year. Well, I never had a liking myself to follow the drum: but it's almost enough to tempt one to it. If I thought I could send home ten guineas to my father, I would 'list to-morrow.'

'That would not be well done of you, Robin,' said John; 'for my father would rather have *you*, a great deal, than the ten guineas, I am sure: to say nothing of my poor mother, and Rose, and myself, who would be sorry enough to hear of your being knocked on the head, as is the fate, sooner or later, of them that follow the army. I would rather be any of the trades that hurt nobody, and do good to a many along with myself, as father said t'other day. Then, what a man makes so, he makes with a safe conscience, and he can enjoy it.'

'You are right, John, and I was wrong to talk of *'listing*,' said Robin; 'but it was only Jack Reel's letter, and the ten guineas sent to his father, that put it into my head. I may make as much for my father by staying at home, and minding my business. So now, good-night to you; I'll go to sleep, and we can talk more about it all to-morrow.'

The next morning, as these two youths were setting potatoes for the family, and considering to what they should turn their hands when the potatoes were all set, they were interrupted by a little *gossoon*, who came running up as hard as he could, crying, 'Murder! murder! Simon O'Dougherty wants you. For the love of God, cross the bog in all haste, to help out his horse, that has tumbled into the old tan-pit, there beyond, in the night!'

The two brothers immediately followed the boy, carrying with them a rope and a halter, as they guessed that *soft Simon* would not have either. They found him wringing his hands beside the tan-pit, in which his horse lay smothering. A little ragged boy was tugging at the horse's head, with a short bit of hay-rope. 'Oh, murder! murder! What *will* I do for a halter?

Sure the horse will be lost for want of a halter; and where in the wide world *will* I look for one?' cried Simon, without stirring one inch from the spot. 'Oh, the blessing of Heaven be with you, lads,' continued he, turning at the sight of the Grays; 'you've brought us a halter. But see! it's just over with the poor beast. All the world put together will not get him alive out of that. I must put up with the loss, and be content. He cost me fifteen good guineas, and he could leap better than any horse in the county. Oh, what a pity on him! what a pity! But, take it easy; that's all we have for it! *Poor cratur! Poor cratur!*'

Without listening to Simon's lamentations, the active lads, by the help of Simon and the two boys, pulled the horse out of the pit. The poor animal was nearly exhausted by struggling: but, after some time, he stretched himself, and, by degrees, recovered sufficiently to stand. One of his legs, however, was so much hurt that he could scarcely walk; and Simon said he would surely go lame for life.

'Who now would ever have thought of his straying into such an ugly place of all others?' continued he. 'I know, for my share, the spot is so overgrown with grass and rubbish, of one kind or other, and it's so long since any of the tanning business was going on here, in my uncle O'Haggarty's time, that I quite forgot there were such things as tan-pits, or any manner of pits, in my possession; and I wish these had been far enough off before my own little famous Sir Hyacinth O'Brien had strayed into them, laming himself for life, like a blockhead. For the case was this: I came home late last night, not as sober as a judge, and, finding no one up but the girl, I gave her the horse to put into the stable, and she forgot the door after her, which wants a lock; and there being but a scanty feed of oats, owing to the boy's negligence, and no halter to secure the beast, my poor Sir Hyacinth strayed out here, as ill luck would have it, into the tan-pit. Bad luck to my uncle O'Haggarty, that had the tan-yard here at all! He might have lived as became him, without dirtying his hands with the tanning of dirty hides.'

'I was just going,' said John Gray, 'to comfort you, Simon, for the laming of your horse, by observing that, if you had your tan-yard in order again, you could soon make up the price of another horse.'

'Ohoo! I would not be bothered with anything of the kind. There's the mill of Rosanna there, beyond, was the plague of my life, till it stopped; and I was glad to have fairly done with it. Them that come after me may set it agoing again, and welcome. I have enough just to serve my time, and am content anyway.'

'But, if you could get a fair rent for the tan-yard, would you let it?' said John.

'To that I should make no objection in life; provided I had no trouble with it,' replied Simon.

'And if you could get somebody to keep the mill of Rosanna going, with-

out giving you any trouble, you would not object to that, would you?' said Robin.

'Not I, to be sure,' replied Simon, laughing. 'Whatever God sends, be it more or less, I am content. But I would not have you think me a fool, for all I talk so easy about the matter; I know very well what I might have got for the mill some years ago, when first it stopped, if I would have let it to the man that proposed for it; but though he was as substantial a tenant as you could see, yet he affronted me once, at the last election, by calling a freeholder of mine over the coals; and so I was proud of an opportunity to show him I did not forget. So I refused to let him the mill on any terms; and I made him a speech for his pride to digest at the same time. "Mr. Hopkins," said I, "the lands of Rosanna have been in my family these two hundred years and upwards; and though, nowadays, many men think that everything is to be done for money, and though you, Mr. Hopkins, have made as much money as most men could in the same time, — all which I don't envy you, — yet I must make bold to tell you that the lands of Rosanna, or any part or parcel thereof, is what you'll never have whilst I'm alive, Mr. Hopkins, for love or money." The spirit of the O'Doughertys was up within me; and though all the world calls me easy Simon, I have my own share of proper spirit. These mushroom money-makers, that start up from the very dirt under one's feet, I can't for my part swallow them. Now I should be happy to give you a lease of the mill of Rosanna, after refusing Hopkins; for you and your father before you, lads, have been always very civil to me. My tan-pits and all I am ready to talk to you about, and thank you for pulling my horse out for me this morning. Will you walk up and look at the mill? I would attend you myself, but must go to the farrier about Sir Hyacinth's leg, instead of standing talking here any longer. Good morning to you kindly. The girl will give you the key of the mill, and show you everything, the same as myself.'

Simon gathered his greatcoat about him, and walked away to the farrier, whilst the two brothers rejoiced that they should see the mill without hearing him talk the whole time. Simon, having nothing to do all day long but to talk, was an indefatigable gossip. When the lands of Rosanna were in question, or when his pride was touched, he was terribly fluent.

Chapter II

Upon examining the mill, which was a common oat-mill, John Gray found that the upper millstone was lodged upon the lower; and that this was all which prevented the mill from going. No other part of it was damaged or out of repair. As to the tan-yard, it was in great disorder; but it was very conveniently situated; was abundantly supplied with water on

one side, and had an oak copse at the back, so that tan could readily be procured. It is true that the bark of these oak trees, which had been planted by his careful uncle O'Haggarty, had been much damaged since Simon came into possession; for he had, with his customary negligence, suffered cattle to get amongst them. He had also, to supply himself with ready money, occasionally cut down a great deal of the best timber before it arrived at its full growth; and at this time the Grays found every tree of tolerable size marked for destruction with the initials of Simon O'Dougherty's name.

Before they said anything more about the mill or the tan-yard to Simon, these prudent brothers consulted their father: he advised them to begin cautiously, by offering to manage the mill and the tan-yard, during the ensuing season, for Simon, for a certain share in the profits; and then, if they should find the business likely to succeed, they might take a lease of the whole. Simon willingly made this agreement; and there was no danger in dealing with him, because, though careless and indolent, he was honest, and would keep his engagements. It was settled that John and Robin should have the power, at the end of the year, either to hold or give up all concern in the mill and tan-yard; and, in the meantime, they were to manage the business for Simon, and to have such a share in the profits as would pay them reasonably for their time and labour.

They succeeded beyond their expectations in the management of the mill and tan-yard during their year of probation; and Simon, at the end of that time, was extremely glad to give them a long lease of the premises, upon their paying him down, by way of fine, the sum of £150. This sum their father, who had good credit, and who could give excellent security upon his farm, which was now in a flourishing condition, raised for them; and they determined to repay him the money by regular yearly portions out of their profits.

Success did not render these young men presumptuous or negligent: they went on steadily with business, were contented to live frugally and work hard for some years. Many of the sons of neighbouring tradesmen and farmers, who were able perhaps to buy a horse or two, or three good coats in a year, and who set up for gentlemen, and spent their days in hunting, shooting, or cock-fighting, thought that the Grays were poor-spirited fellows for sticking so close to business. They prophesied that, even when these brothers should have made a fortune, they would not have the liberality to spend or enjoy it; but this prediction was not verified. The Grays had not been brought up to place their happiness merely in the scraping together pounds, shillings, and pence; they valued money for money's worth, not for money's sake; and, amongst the pleasures it could purchase, they thought that of contributing to the happiness of their parents and friends the greatest. When they had paid their father the hundred and fifty pounds he had advanced, their next object was to build

a neat cottage for him, near the wood and mill of Rosanna, on a beautiful spot, upon which they had once heard him say that he should like to have a house.

We mentioned that Mr. Hopkins, the agent, had a view to this farm; and that he was desirous of getting rid of the Grays: but this he found no easy matter to accomplish, because the rent was always punctually paid. There was no pretence for *driving*, even for the duty-fowls; Mrs. Gray always had them ready at the proper time. Mr. Hopkins was further provoked by seeing the rich improvements which our farmer made every year on his land: his envy, which could be moved by the meanest objects of gain, was continually excited by his neighbour's successful industry. To-day he envied him his green meadows, and to-morrow the crocks of butter packed on the car for Dublin. Farmer Gray's ten cows, which regularly passed by Mr. Hopkins's window morning and evening, were a sight that often spoiled his breakfast and supper; but that which grieved this envious man the most was the barrack manure; he would stand at his window, and, with a heavy heart, count the car-loads that went by to Gray's farm.

Once he made an attempt to ruin Gray's friend, the sergeant, by accusing him secretly of being bribed to sell the barrack manure to Gray for less than he had been offered for it by others: but the officer to whom Mr. Hopkins made this complaint was fortunately a man who did not like secret informations: he publicly inquired into the truth of the matter, and the sergeant's honesty and Mr. Hopkins's meanness were clearly proved and contrasted. The consequence of this malicious interference was beneficial to Gray; for the officer told the story to the colonel of the regiment which was next quartered in the town, and he to the officer who succeeded him; so that year after year Mr. Hopkins applied in vain for the barrack manure. Farmer Gray had always the preference, and the hatred of Mr. Hopkins knew no bounds; that is, no bounds but the letter of the law, of which he was ever mindful, because lawsuits are expensive.

At length, however, he devised a legal mode of *annoying* his enemy. Some land belonging to Mr. Hopkins lay between Gray's farm and the only bog in the neighbourhood: now he would not permit Mr. Gray, or anybody belonging to him, to draw turf upon his bog-road; and he absolutely forbade his own wretched tenants to sell turf to the object of his envy. By these means, he flattered himself he should literally starve the enemy out of house and home.

Things were in this situation when John and Robin Gray determined to build a house for their father at Rosanna. They made no secret to him of their intentions; for they did not want to surprise but to please him, and to do everything in the manner that would be most convenient to him and their mother. Their sister Rose was in all their counsels; and it had been for the last three years one of her chief delights to go, after her

day's work was done, to the mill at Rosanna, to see how her brothers were going on. How happy are those families where there is no envy or jealousy; but in which each individual takes an interest in the prosperity of the whole! Farmer Gray was heartily pleased with the gratitude and generosity of his boys, as he still continued to call them; though, by the by, John was now three-and-twenty, and his brother only two years younger.

'My dear boys,' said he, 'nothing could be more agreeable to me and your mother than to have a snug cottage near you both, on the very spot which you say I pitched upon two years ago. This cabin that we now live in, after all I have tried to do to prop it up, and notwithstanding all Rose does to keep it neat and clean withinside, is but a crazy sort of a place. We are able now to have a better house, and I shall be glad to be out of the reach of Mr. Hopkins's persecution. Therefore, let us set about and build the new house. You shall contribute your share, my boys; but only a share: mind, I say only a share. And I hope next year to contribute my share towards building a house for each of you: it is time you should think of marrying, and settling: it is no bad thing to have a house ready for a bride. We shall have quite a little colony of our own at Rosanna. Who knows but I may live to see my grandchildren, ay, and my great-grandchildren, settled there all round me, industrious and contented?'

Good-will is almost as expeditious and effectual as Aladdin's lamp:—the new cottage for farmer Gray was built at Rosanna, and he took possession of it the ensuing spring. They next made a garden, and furnished it with all sorts of useful vegetables and some pretty flowers. Rose had great pleasure in taking care of this garden. Her brothers also laid out a small green lawn before the door; and planted the boundaries with white-thorn, crab-trees, lilacs, and laburnums. The lawn sloped down to the water-side; and the mill and copse behind it were seen from the parlour windows. A prettier cottage, indeed so pretty a one, was never before seen in this county.

But what was better far than the pretty cottage, or the neat garden, or the green lawn, or the white-thorn, the crab-trees, the lilacs, and the laburnums, was the content that smiled amongst them.

Many who have hundreds and thousands are miserable, because they still desire more; or rather because they know not what they would have. For instance, Mr. Hopkins, the rich Mr. Hopkins, who had scraped in about fifteen years above twenty thousand, some said thirty thousand pounds, had never been happy for a single day, either whilst he was making this fortune or when he had made it; for he was of an avaricious, discontented temper. The more he had, the more he desired. He could not bear the prosperity of his neighbours; and if his envy made him industrious, yet it at the same time rendered him miserable. Though he was what the world calls a remarkably fortunate man, yet the feelings of his own mind

prevented him from enjoying his success. He had no wife, no children, to share his wealth. He would not marry, because a wife is expensive; and children are worse than taxes. His whole soul was absorbed in the love of gain. He denied himself not only the comforts but the common necessaries of life. He was alone in the world. He was conscious that no human being loved him. He read his history in the eyes of all his neighbours.

It was known that he had risen upon the ruin of others; and the higher he had risen, the more conspicuous became the faults of his character. Whenever any man grew negligent of his affairs, or by misfortune was reduced to distress, Hopkins was at hand to take advantage of his necessities. His first approaches were always made under the semblance of friendship; but his victims soon repented their imprudent confidence when they felt themselves in his power. Unrestrained by a sense of honour or the feelings of humanity, he felt no scruple in pursuing his interest to the very verge of what the law would call fraud. Even his own relations complained that he duped them without scruple; and none but strangers to his character, or persons compelled by necessity, would have any dealings with this man. Of what advantage to him, or to any one else, were the thousands he had accumulated?

It may be said that such beings are necessary in society; that their industry is productive; and that, therefore, they ought to be preferred to the idle, unproductive members of the community: but wealth and happiness are not the same things. Perhaps, at some future period, enlightened politicians may think the happiness of nations more important than their wealth. In this point of view, they would consider all the members of society who are productive of happiness as neither useless nor despicable; and, on the contrary, they would contemn and discourage those who merely accumulate money, without enjoying or dispensing happiness. But some centuries must probably elapse before such a philosophic race of politicians can arise. In the meantime, let us go on with our story.

Chapter III

Mr. Hopkins was enraged when he found that his expected victim escaped his snares. He saw the pretty cottage rise, and the mill of Rosanna work, in despite of his malevolence. He long brooded over his malice in silence. As he stood one day on the top of a high mount on his own estate, from which he had a view of the surrounding country, his eyes fixed upon the little paradise in the possession of his enemies. He always called those his enemies of whom he was the enemy: this is no uncommon mistake, in the language of the passions.

'The Rosanna mill shall be stopped before this day twelve-month, or my name is not Hopkins,' said he to himself. 'I have sworn vengeance against those Grays; but I will humble them to the dust, before I have

done with them. I shall never sleep in peace till I have driven those people from the country.'

It was, however, no easy matter to drive from the country such inoffensive inhabitants. The first thing Mr. Hopkins resolved upon was to purchase from Simon O'Dougherty the field adjoining to that in which the mill stood. The brook flowed through this field, and Mr. Hopkins saw, with malicious satisfaction, that he could at a small expense turn the course of the stream, and cut off the water from the mill.

Poor Simon by this time had reduced himself to a situation in which his pride was compelled to yield to pecuniary considerations. Within the last three years, his circumstances had been materially changed. Whilst he was a bachelor, his income had been sufficient to maintain him in idleness. Soft Simon, however, at last, took it into his head to marry; or rather a cunning damsel, who had been his mistress for some years, took it into her head to make him marry. She was skilled in the arts both of wheedling and scolding: to resist these united powers was too much to be expected from a man of Simon's easy temper.

He argued thus with himself: — 'She has cost me more as she is than if she had been my wife twice over; for she has no interest in looking after anything belonging to me, but only just living on from day to day, and making the most for herself and her children. And the children, too, all in the same way, snatching what they could make sure of for themselves. Now, if I make her my lawful wife, as she desires, the property will be hers, as well as mine; and it will be her interest to look after all. She is a stirring, notable woman, and will save me a world of trouble, and make the best of everything for her children's sake; and they, being then all acknowledged by me, will make my interest their own, as she says; and, besides, this is the only way left me to have peace.'

To avoid the cares and plagues of matrimony, and that worst of plagues a wife's tongue, Simon first was induced to keep a mistress, and now, to silence his mistress, he made her his wife. She assured him that, till she was his lawful lady, she never should have peace or quietness; nor could she, in conscience, suffer him to have a moment's rest.

Simon married her, to use his own phrase, out of hand: but the marriage was only the beginning of new troubles. The bride had hordes and clans of relations, who came pouring in from all quarters to pay their respects to Mrs. O'Dougherty. Her good easy man could not shut his doors against any one: the O'Doughertys were above a hundred years, ay, two hundred years ago, famous for hospitality; and it was incumbent upon Simon O'Dougherty to keep up the honour of the family. His four children were now to be maintained in idleness; for they, like their father, had an insurmountable aversion to business. The public opinion of Simon suddenly changed. Those who were any way related to the O'Doughertys, and who dreaded that he and his children should apply to them for pe-

cuniary assistance, began the cry against him of, 'What a shame it is that the man does not do something for himself and his family! How can those expect to be helped who won't help themselves? He is contented, indeed! Yes, and he must soon be contented to sell the lands that have been in the family so long; and then, by and by, he must be content, if he does not bestir himself, to be carried to jail. It is a sin for any one to be content to eat the bread of idleness!'

These and similar reproaches were uttered often, in our idle hero's presence. They would perhaps have excited him to some sort of exertion, if his friend, Sir Hyacinth O'Brien, had not, in consequence of certain electioneering services, and in consideration of his being one of the best sportsmen in the county, and of Simon's having named a horse after him, procured for him a place of about fifty pounds a year in the revenue. Upon the profits of this place Simon contrived to live, in a shambling sort of way.

How long he might have shuffled on is a problem which must now for ever remain unsolved; for his indolence was not permitted to take its natural course; his ruin was accelerated by the secret operation of an active and malignant power. Mr. Hopkins, who had determined to get that field which joined to Gray's mill, and who well knew that the pride of the O'Doughertys would resist the idea of selling to him any part or parcel of the lands of Rosanna, devised a scheme to reduce Simon to immediate and inextricable distress. Simon was, as it might have been foreseen, negligent in discharging the duties of his office, which was that of a supervisor.

He either did not know or connived at the practices of sundry illegal distillers in his neighbourhood. Malicious tongues did not scruple to say that he took money, upon some occasions, from the delinquents; but this he positively denied. Possibly his wife and sons knew more of this matter than he did. They sold certain scraps of paper, called protections, to several petty distillers, whose safest protection would have been Simon's indolence. One of the scraps of paper, to which there was O'Dougherty's signature, fell into the hands of Mr. Hopkins.

That nothing might be omitted to ensure his disgrace, Hopkins sent a person, on whom he could depend, to give Simon notice that there was an illegal still at such a house, naming the house for which the protection was granted. Soft Simon received the information with his customary carelessness, said it was too late to think of going to seize the still that evening, and declared he would have it seized the next day: but the next day he put it off, and the day afterwards he forgot it, and the day after that, he received a letter from the collector of excise, summoning him to answer to an information which had been laid against him for misconduct. In this emergency, he resolved to have recourse to his friend Sir Hyacinth O'Brien, who, he thought, could make interest to screen him from justice.

Sir Hyacinth gave him a letter to the collector, who happened to be in the country. Away he went with the letter: he was met on the road by a friend, who advised him to ride as hard after the collector as he could, to overtake him before he should reach Counsellor Quin's, where he was engaged to dine. Counsellor Quin was candidate for the county in opposition to Sir Hyacinth O'Brien; and it was well understood that whomsoever the one favoured the other hated. It behoved Simon, therefore, to overtake the collector before he should be within the enemy's gates. Simon whipped and spurred, and puffed and fretted, but all in vain, for he was mounted upon the horse which, as the reader may remember, fell into the tan-pit. The collector reached Counsellor Quin's long before Simon arrived; and, when he presented Sir Hyacinth's letter, it was received in a manner that showed it came too late. Simon lost his place and his fifty pounds a year: but what he found most trying to his temper were the reproaches of his wife, which were loud, bitter, and unceasing. He knew, from experience, that nothing could silence her but letting her 'have all the plea'; so he suffered her to rail till she was quite out of breath, and he very nearly asleep, and then said, 'What you have been observing is all very just, no doubt; but since a thing past can't be recalled, and those that are upon the ground, as our proverb says, can go no lower, that's a great comfort; so we may be content.'

'Content, in troth! Is it content to live upon potatoes and salt? I, that am your lawful wife! And you, that are an O'Dougherty too, to let your lady be demeaned and looked down upon, as she will be now, even by them that are sprung up from nothing since yesterday. There's Mrs. Gray, over yonder at Rosanna, living on your own land: look at her and look at me! and see what a difference there is!'

'Some difference there surely is,' said Simon.

'Some difference there surely is,' repeated Mrs. O'Dougherty, raising her voice to the shrillest note of objurgation; for she was provoked by a sigh that escaped Simon, as he pronounced his reply, or rather his acceding sentence. Nothing, in some cases, provokes a female so much as agreeing with her.

'And if there is some difference betwixt me and Mrs. Gray, I should be glad to know whose fault that is.'

'So should I, Mrs. O'Dougherty.'

'Then I'll tell you, instantly, whose fault it is, Mr. O'Dougherty: the fault is your own, Mr. O'Dougherty. No, the fault is mine, Mr. O'Dougherty, for marrying you, or consorting with you at all. If I had been matched to an active, industrious man, like Mr. Gray, I might have been as well in the world and better than Mrs. Gray; for I should become a fortune better than she, or any of her seed, breed, or generation; and it's a scandal in the face of the world, and all the world says so, it's a scandal to see them Grays flourishing and settling a colony; there at Rosanna, at our expense!'

'Not at our expense, my dear, for you know we made nothing of either tan-yard or mill; and now they pay us £30 a year, and that punctually too. What should we do without it, now we have lost the place in the revenue? I am sure, I think we were very lucky to get such tenants as the Grays.'

'In truth, I think no such thing; for if you had been blessed with the sense of a midge, you might have done all they have done yourself: and then what a different way your lawful wife and family would have been in! I am sure I wish it had pleased the saints above to have married me, when they were about it, to such a man as farmer Gray or his sons.'

'As for the sons,' said Simon, 'they are a little out of the way in point of age, but to farmer Gray I see no objection in life: and if he sees none, and will change wives, I'm sure, Ally, I shall be content.'

The sort of composure and dry humour with which Simon made this last speech overcame the small remains of Mrs. O'Dougherty's patience: she burst into a passion of tears; and from this hour, it being now past eleven o'clock at night, from this hour till six in the morning she never ceased weeping, wailing, and upbraiding.

Simon rose from his sleepless bed, saying, 'The saints above, as you call them, must take care of you now, Ally, anyhow; for I'm fairly tired out: so I must go a-hunting or a-shooting with my friend Sir Hyacinth O'Brien, to recruit my spirit.'

The unfortunate Simon found, to his mortification, that his horse was so lame he could scarcely walk. Whilst he was considering where he could borrow a horse just for the day's hunt, Mr. Hopkins rode into his yard, mounted upon a fine hunter. Though naturally supercilious, this gentleman could stoop to conquer: he was well aware of Simon's dislike to him, but he also knew that Simon was in distress for money. Even the strongest passions of those who involve themselves in pecuniary difficulties must yield to the exigencies of the moment. Easy Simon's indolence had now reduced him to a situation in which his pride was obliged to bend to his interest. Mr. Hopkins had once been repulsed with haughtiness by the representative of the O'Dougherty family, when he offered to purchase some of the family estate; but his proposal was now better timed, and was made with all the address of which he was master. He began by begging Simon to give him his opinion of the horse on which he was mounted, as he knew Mr. O'Dougherty was a particularly good judge of a hunter; and he would not buy it from Counsellor Quin's groom without having a skilful friend's advice. Then he asked whether it was true that Simon and the collector had quarrelled, exclaimed against the malice and officiousness of the informer, whoever he might be, and finished by observing that, if the loss of his place put Simon to any inconvenience, there was a ready way of supplying himself with money, by the sale of any of the lands of Rosanna. The immediate want of a horse, and the comparison he made, at this

moment, between the lame animal on which he was leaning and the fine hunter upon which Hopkins was mounted, had more effect upon Simon than all the rest. Before they parted, Mr. Hopkins concluded a bargain for the field on which he had set his heart: he obtained it for less than its value by three years' purchase. The hunter was part of the valuable consideration he gave to Simon.

The moment that Hopkins was in possession of this field adjoining to Gray's mill, he began to execute a malignant project which he had long been contriving.

We shall leave him to his operations; matters of higher import claim attention. One morning, as Rose was on the little lawn before the house door, gathering the first snowdrops of the year, a servant in a handsome livery rode up, and asked if Mr. Gray or any of the family were at home. Her father and brothers were out in the fields, at some distance; but she said she would run and call them. 'There is no occasion, Miss,' said the servant; 'for the business is only to leave these cards for the ladies of the family.'

He put two cards into Rose's hand, and galloped off with the air of a man who had a vast deal of business of importance to transact. The card contained an invitation to an election ball, which Sir Hyacinth O'Brien was going to give to the secondary class of gentry in the county.

Rose took the cards to her mother; and whilst they were reading them over for the second time, in came farmer Gray to breakfast. 'What have we here, child? said he, taking up one of the cards. He looked at his wife and daughter with some anxiety for a moment; and then, as if he did not wish to restrain them, turned the conversation to another subject, and nothing was said of the ball till breakfast was over.

Mrs. Gray then bade Rose go and put her flowers into water; and as soon as she was out of the room, said, 'My dear, I see you don't like that we should go to this ball; so I am glad I did not say what I thought of it to Rose before you came in: for you must know, I had a mother's foolish vanity about me; and the minute I saw the card, I pictured to myself our Rose dressed like any of the best of the ladies, and looking handsomer than most of them, and everybody admiring her! But perhaps the girl is better as she is, having not been bred to be a lady. And yet, now we are as well in the world as many that set up for and are reckoned gentlefolks, why should not our girl take this opportunity of rising a step in life?'

Mrs. Gray spoke with some confusion and hesitation. 'My dear,' replied farmer Gray, in a gentle yet firm tone, 'it is very natural that you, being the mother of such a girl as our Rose, should be proud of her, and eager to show her to the best advantage; but the main point is to make her happy, not to do just what will please our own vanity for the minute. Now I am not at all sure that raising her a step in life, even if we could

do it by sending her to this ball, would be for her happiness. Are not we happy as we are —— Come in, Rose, love; come in; I should be glad for you to hear what we are saying, and judge for yourself; you are old enough, and wise enough, I am sure. I was going to ask, are not we all happy in the way we live together now?'

'Yes! Oh yes! That we are indeed,' said both the wife and daughter.

'Then should not we be content, and not wish to alter our condition?'

'But to go to only one ball, father, would not alter our condition, would it?' said Rose, timidly.

'If we begin once to set up for gentry, we shall not like to go back again to be what we are now: so, before we begin, we had best consider what we have to gain by a change. We have meat, drink, clothes, and fire: what more could we have, if we were gentry? We have enough to do, and not too much; we are all well pleased with ourselves, and with one another; we have health and good consciences: what more could we have, if we were to set up to be gentry? Or rather, to put the question closer, could we in that case have all these comforts? No, I think not: for, in the first place, we should be straitened for want of money; because a world of baubles, that we don't feel the want of now, would become as necessary to us as our daily bread. We should be ashamed not to have all the things that gentlefolks have; though these don't signify a straw, nor half a straw, in point of any real pleasure they give, still they must be had. Then we should be ashamed of the work by which we must make money to pay for all these nicknacks. John and Robin would blush up to the eyes, then, if they were to be caught by the genteel folks in their mill, heaving up sacks of flour, and covered all over with meal; or if they were to be found, with their arms bare beyond the elbows, in the tan-yard. And you, Rose, would hurry your spinning-wheel out of sight, and be afraid to be caught cooking my dinner. Yet there is no shame in any of these things, and now we are all proud of doing them.'

'And long may we be so!' cried Mrs. Gray. 'You are right, and I spoke like a foolish woman. Rose, my child, throw these cards into the fire. We are happy, and contented: and if we change, we shall be discontented and unhappy, as so many of what they call our betters are. There! the cards are burnt; now let us think no more about them.'

'Rose, I hope, is not disappointed about this ball; are you, my little Rose?' said her father, drawing her towards him, and seating her on his knee.

'There was one reason, father,' said Rose, blushing, 'there was one reason, and only one, why I wished to have gone to this ball.'

'Well, let us hear it. You shall do as you please, I promise you beforehand. But tell us the reason. I believe you have found it somewhere at the bottom of that snowdrop, which you have been examining this last quarter of an hour. Come, let me have a peep,' added he, laughing.

'The only reason, papa, *is* — *was*, I mean,' said Rose. — 'But look! Oh, I can't tell you now. See who is coming.'

It was Sir Hyacinth O'Brien, in his gig; and with him his English servant, Stafford, whose staid and sober demeanour was a perfect contrast to the dash and bustle of his master's appearance. This was an electioneering visit. Sir Hyacinth was canvassing the county — a business in which he took great delight, and in which he was said to excel. He possessed all the requisite qualifications, and was certainly excited by a sufficiently strong motive; for he knew that, if he should lose his election, he should at the same time lose his liberty, as the privilege of a Member of Parliament was necessary to protect him from being arrested. He had a large estate, yet he was one of the poorest men in the county; for, no matter what a person's fortune may be, if he spend more than his income, he must be poor. Sir Hyacinth O'Brien not only spent more than his income, but desired that his rent-roll should be thought to be at least double what it really was: of course he was obliged to live up to the fortune which he affected to possess; and this idle vanity early in life entangled him in difficulties from which he had never sufficient strength of mind to extricate himself. He was ambitious to be the leading man in his county, studied all the arts of popularity, and found them extremely expensive, and stood a contested election. He succeeded; but his success cost him several thousands. All was to be set to rights by his talents as a public speaker, and these were considerable. He had eloquence, wit, humour, and sufficient assurance to place them all in the fullest light. His speeches in Parliament were much admired, and the passion of ambition was now kindled in his mind: he determined to be a leading man in the senate; and whilst he pursued this object with enthusiasm, his private affairs were entirely neglected. Ambition and economy never can agree. Sir Hyacinth, however, found it necessary to the happiness, that is, to the splendour, of his existence, to supply, by some means or other, the want of what he called the paltry, selfish, counterfeit virtue — economy. Nothing less would do than the sacrifice of that which had been once in his estimation the most noble and generous of human virtues — patriotism. The sacrifice was painful, but he could not avoid making it; because, after living upon five thousand a year, he could not live upon five hundred. So, from a flaming patriot, he sank into a pensioned placeman.

He then employed all his powers of wit and sophistry to ridicule the principles which he had abandoned. In short, he affected to glory in a species of political profligacy; and laughed or sneered at public virtue, as if it could only be the madness of enthusiasm, or the meanness of hypocrisy. By the brilliancy of his conversation, and the gaiety of his manners, Sir Hyacinth sometimes succeeded in persuading others that he was in the right; but, alas! there was one person whom he could never deceive, and that was himself. He despised himself, and nothing could make him

amends for the self-complacency that he had lost. Without self-approbation, all the luxuries of life are tasteless.

Sir Hyacinth O'Brien, however, was for some years thought, by those who could see only the outward man, to be happy; and it was not till the derangement of his affairs became public that the world began at once to pity and blame him. He had a lucrative place, but he was, or thought himself, obliged to live in a style suited to it; and he was not one shilling the richer for his place. He endeavoured to repair his shattered fortunes by marrying a rich heiress, but the heiress was, or thought herself, obliged to live up to her fortune; and, of course, her husband was not one shilling the richer for his marriage. When Sir Hyacinth was occasionally distressed for money, his agent, who managed all affairs in his absence, borrowed money with as much expedition as possible; and expedition, in matters of business, must, as everybody knows, be paid for exorbitantly. There are men who, upon such terms, will be as expeditious in lending money as extravagance and ambition united can desire. Mr. Hopkins was one of these: and he was the money-lender who supplied the baronet's real and imaginary wants. Sir Hyacinth did not know the extreme disorder of his own affairs, till a sudden dissolution of Parliament obliged him to prepare for the expense of a new election. When he went into the country, he was at once beset with duns and constituents who claimed from him favours and promises. Miserable is the man who courts popularity, if he be not rich enough to purchase what he covets.

Our baronet endeavoured to laugh off with a good grace his apostasy from the popular party; and whilst he could laugh at the head of a plentiful table, he could not fail to find many who would laugh with him; but there was a strong party formed against him in the county. Two other candidates were his competitors; one of them was Counsellor Quin, a man of vulgar manners and mean abilities, but yet one who could drink and cajole electors full as well as Sir Hyacinth with all his wit and elegance. The other candidate, Mr. Molyneux, was still more formidable; not as an electioneer, but as a man of talents and unimpeached integrity, which had been successfully exerted in the service of his country. He was no demagogue, but the friend of justice and of the poor, whom he would not suffer to be oppressed by the hand of power, or persecuted by the malice of party spirit. A large number of grateful independent constituents united to support this gentleman. Sir Hyacinth O'Brien had reason to tremble for his fate; it was to him a desperate game. He canvassed the county with the most keen activity; and took care to engage in his interest all those *underlings* who delight in galloping round the country to electioneer, and who think themselves paid by the momentary consequence they enjoy and the bustle they create.

Amongst these busybodies was Simon O'Dougherty; indolent in all his own concerns, he was remarkably active in managing the affairs of others.

His home being now insufferable to him, he was glad to stroll about the country; and to him Sir Hyacinth O'Brien left all the dirty work of the canvass. Soft Simon had reduced himself to the lowest class of *stalkoes* or *walking gentlemen*, as they are termed; men who have nothing to do, and no fortune to support them, but who style themselves esquire; and who, to use their own mode of expression, are jealous of that title, and of their claims to family antiquity. Sir Hyacinth O'Brien knew at once how to flatter Simon's pride, and to lure him on by promises. Soft Simon believed that the baronet, if he gained his election, would procure him some place equivalent to that of which he had been lately deprived. Upon the faith of this promise, Simon worked harder for his patron than he ever was known to do upon any previous occasion; and he was not deficient in that essential characteristic of an electioneerer, boasting. He carried this habit sometimes rather too far, for he not only boasted so as to bully the opposite party, but so as to deceive his friends: over his bottle, he often persuaded his patron that he could command voters, with whom he had no manner of influence. For instance: he told Sir Hyacinth O'Brien that he was certain all the Grays would vote for him; and it was in consequence of this assurance that the cards of invitation to the ball had been sent to Rose and her mother, and that the baronet was now come in person to pay his respects at Rosanna.

We have kept him waiting an unconscionable time at the cottage door; we must now show him in.

Chapter IV

The beauty of Rose was the first thing that struck him upon his entrance. The impression was so sudden, and so lively, that, for a few minutes, the election, and all that belonged to it, vanished from his memory. The politeness of a county candidate made him appear, in other houses, charmed with father, mother, son, and daughter; but in this cottage there was no occasion for dissimulation; he was really pleased with each individual of the family. The natural feelings of the heart were touched. The ambitious man forgot all his schemes and all his cares in the contemplation of this humble picture of happiness and content; and the baronet conversed a full quarter of an hour with farmer Gray, before he relapsed into himself.

'How much happier,' thought he, 'are these people than I am, or than I ever have been! They are contented in obscurity; I was discontented even in the full blaze of celebrity. But my fate is fixed. I embarked on the sea of politics as thoughtlessly as if it were only on a party of pleasure: now I am chained to the oar, and a galley-slave cannot be more wretched.'

Perhaps the beauty of Rose had some share in exciting Sir Hyacinth's sudden taste for rural felicity. It is certain he at first expressed more

disappointment at hearing she would not go to the ball, than at being told her father and brothers could not vote for him. Farmer Gray, who was as independent in his principles as in his circumstances, honestly answered the baronet that he thought Mr. Molyneux the fittest man to represent the county; and that it was for him he should therefore vote. Sir Hyacinth tried all his powers of persuasion in vain, and he left the cottage mortified and melancholy.

He met Simon O'Dougherty when he had driven a few miles from the door; and, in a tone of much pique and displeasure, reproached him for having deceived him into a belief that the Grays were his friends. Simon was rather embarrassed; but the genius of gossiping had luckily just supplied him with a hint, by which he could extricate himself from this difficulty.

'The fault is all your own, if I may make so free as to tell you so. Sir Hyacinth O'Brien,' said he, 'as capital an electioneerer as you are, I'll engage I'll find one that shall outdo you here. Send me and Stafford back again this minute to Rosanna, and we'll bring you the three votes as dead as crows in an hour's time, or my name is not O'Dougherty now.'

'I protest, Mr. O'Dougherty, I do not understand you.'

'Then let me whisper half a word in your ear, Sir Hyacinth, and I'll make you sensible I'm right.' Simon winked most significantly, and looked wondrous wise; then stretching himself half off his horse into the gig to gain Sir Hyacinth's ear, he whispered that he knew, from the best authority, Stafford was in love with Gray's pretty daughter Rose, and that Rose had no dislike to him; that she was all in all to her father and brothers, and of course could and would secure their votes, if properly spoken to.

This intelligence did not immediately produce the pleasing change of countenance which might have been expected. Sir Hyacinth coldly replied, he could not spare Stafford at present and drove on. The genius of gossiping, according to her usual custom, had exaggerated considerably in her report. Stafford was attached to Rose, but had never yet told her so; and as to Rose, we might perhaps have known all her mind, if Sir Hyacinth's gig had not appeared just as she was seated on her father's knee, and going to tell him her reasons for wishing to go to the ball.

Stafford acted in the capacity of house-steward to the baronet; and had the management of all his master's unmanageable servants. He had brought with him from England ideas of order and punctuality, which were somewhat new, and extremely troublesome to the domestics at Hyacinth Hall: consequently he was much disliked by them; and not only by them but by most of the country people in the neighbourhood, who imagined he had a strong predilection in favour of everything that was English, and an undisguised contempt for all that was Irish. They, however, perceived that this prejudice against the Irish admitted of excep-

tions: the family of the Grays, Stafford acknowledged, were almost as orderly, punctual, industrious, and agreeable, as if they had been born in England. This was matter of so much surprise to him, that he could not forbear going at every leisure hour to the mill or the cottage of Rosanna, to convince himself that such things could actually be in Ireland. He bought all the flour for the Hall at Rosanna mill; and Rose supplied the housekeeper constantly with poultry; so that his master's business continually obliged Stafford to repeat his visits; and every time he went to Gray's cottage, he thought it more and more like an English farmhouse, and imagined Rose every day looked more like an Englishwoman than anything else. What a pity she was not born the other side of the water; for then his mother and friends in Warwickshire could never have made any objection to her. But, she being an Irishwoman, they would for certain never fancy her. He had oftentimes heard them as good as say that it would break their hearts if he was to marry and settle amongst the bogs and the wild Irish.

This recollection of his friends' prejudices at first deterred Stafford from thinking of marrying Rose; but it sometimes happens that reflection upon the prejudices of others shows us the folly of our own, and so it was in the present instance. Stafford wrote frequently to his friends in Warwickshire, to assure them that they had quite wrong notions of Ireland: that all Ireland was not a bog; that there were several well-grown trees in the parts he had visited; that there were some as pretty villages as you could wish to see anywhere, only that they called them towns; that the men, though some of them still wear brogues, were more hospitable to strangers than the English; and that the women, when not smoke-dried, were some of the handsomest he had seen, especially one Rose or Rosamond Gray, who was also the best and most agreeable girl he had ever known; though it was almost a sin to say so much of one who was not an Englishwoman born.

Much more in the same strain Stafford wrote to his mother, who, in reply to these letters, 'besought him to consider well what he was about, before he suffered himself to begin falling desperately in love with this Rose or Rosamond Gray, or any Irishwoman whatsoever, who, having been bred in a mud-walled cabin, could never be expected to turn out at the long run equal to a true-born Englishwoman, bred in a slated house.'

Stafford's notions had been so much enlarged by his travel, that he could not avoid smiling at some passages in his mother's epistle; yet he so far agreed with her in opinion as to think it prudent not to begin falling desperately in love with any woman, whether Irish or English, till he was thoroughly acquainted with her temper and disposition. He therefore prudently forbore, that is to say, as much as he could forbear, to show any signs of his attachment to Rose, till he had full opportunity of forming a decisive judgment of her character.

This he had now in his power. He saw that his master was struck with the fair Rosamond's charms; and he knew that Sir Hyacinth would pursue his purpose with no common perseverance. His heart beat with joy, when the card which brought her refusal arrived. He read it over and over again; and at last put it into his bosom, close to his heart. 'Rose is a good daughter,' said he to himself; 'and that is a sign that she will make a good wife. She is too innocent to see or suspect that master has taken a fancy to her, but she is right to do as her prudent, affectionate father advises. I never loved that farmer Gray so well, in all my whole life, as a this instant.'

Stafford was interrupted in his reverie by his master, who, in an angry voice, called for him to inquire why he had not, according to his orders, served out some oats for his horses the preceding day. The truth was, that anxiety about Rose and the ball had made him totally forget the oats. Stafford coloured a good deal, confessed that he had done very wrong to forget the oats, but that he would go to the granary immediately, and serve them out to the groom. Perhaps Stafford's usual exactness might have rendered his omission pardonable to any less irritable and peremptory master than Sir H. O'Brien.

When Sterne once heard a master severely reprimanding a servant for some trifling fault, he said to the gentleman, 'My dear sir, we should not expect to have every virtue under the sun for £20 a year.'

Sir Hyacinth O'Brien expected to have them for merely the promise of £20 a year. Though he never punctually paid his servants' wages, he abused them most insolently whenever he was in a passion. Upon the present occasion, his ill-humour was heightened by jealousy.

'I wish, sir,' cried he to Stafford, after pouring forth a volley of oaths, 'you would mind your business, and not run after objects that are not fit for you. You are become good for nothing of late; careless, insolent, and not fit to be trusted.'

Stafford bore all that his master said till he came to the words not fit to be trusted; but the moment those were uttered, he could no longer command himself; he threw down the great key of the granary, which he held in his hand, and exclaimed, 'Not fit to be trusted! Is this the reward of all my services? Not fit to be trusted! Then I have no business here.'

'The sooner you go the better, sir,' cried the angry baronet, who, at this instant, desired nothing more than to get him out of his way. 'You had best set off for England directly: I have no farther occasion for your services.'

Stafford said not a word more, but retired from his master's presence to conceal his emotion; and, when he was alone, burst into tears, repeating to himself, 'So this is the reward of all my services!'

When Sir Hyacinth's passion cooled, he reflected that seven years'

wages were due to Stafford; and as it was not convenient to him at this election time to part with so much ready money, he resolved to compromise. It was not from any sense of justice; therefore it must be said he had the meanness to apologise to his steward, and to hint that he was welcome to remain, if he pleased, in his service.

Satisfied by this explanation, and by the condescension with which it was given, Stafford's affection for his master returned with all its wonted force: and he resumed his former occupations about the house with redoubled activity. He waited only till he could be spared for a day to go to Rosanna, and make his proposal for Rose. Her behaviour concerning the ball convinced him that his mother's prejudices against Irishwomen were ill founded. Whilst his mind was in this state, his master one morning sent for him, and told him that it was absolutely necessary he should go to a neighbouring county, to some persons who were freeholders, and whose votes might turn the election. The business would only occupy a few days, Sir Hyacinth said; and Stafford willingly undertook it.

The gentlemen to whom Stafford had letters were not at home, and he was detained above a fortnight. When he returned, he took a road which led by Rosanna, that he might at least have the pleasure of seeing Rose for a few minutes; but when he called at the cottage, to his utter surprise, he was refused admittance. Being naturally of a warm temper, and not deficient in pride, his first impulse was to turn his horse's head, and gallop off: but, checking his emotion, he determined not to leave the place till he should discover the cause of this change of conduct. He considered that none of this family had formerly treated him with caprice or duplicity; it was therefore improbable they should suddenly alter their conduct towards him, unless they had reason to believe that they had some sufficient cause. He rode immediately to a field where he saw some labourers at work. Farmer Gray was with them. Stafford leaped from his horse, and with an air of friendly honesty, held out his hand, saying, 'I can't believe you mean to affront me: tell me what is the reason I am not to be let into your house, my good friend.'

Gray leaned upon his stick, and, after looking at him for a moment, replied, 'We have been too hasty, I see: we have had no cause of quarrel with you, Stafford; you could never look at me with that honest countenance, if you had any hand in this business.'

'What business?' cried Stafford.

'Walk home with me, out of the hearing of these people, and you shall know.'

As they walked towards his cottage, Gray took out his great leather pocket-book, and searched for a letter. 'Pray, Stafford,' said he, 'did you, about ten days ago, send my girl a melon?'

'Yes; one of my own raising. I left it with the gardener, to be sent to her with my best respects and services; and a message intimating to say

that I was sorry my master's business required I should take a journey, and could not see her for a few days, or something that way.'

'No such message came; only your services, the melon, and this note. I declare,' continued Gray, looking at Stafford whilst he read the letter, 'he turns as pale as my wife herself did when I showed it to her!'

Stafford, indeed, grew pale with anger. It was a billet-doux from his master to Rose, which Sir Hyacinth entreated might be kept secret, promising to make her fortune and marry her well, if she would only have compassion upon a man who adored and was dying for her, etc.

'I will never see my master again,' exclaimed Stafford. 'I could not see him without the danger of doing something that I might not forgive myself. He a gentleman! He a gentleman! I'll gallop off and leave his letters, and his horse, with some of his people. I'll never see him again. If he does not pay me a farthing of my seven years' wages, I don't care; I will not sleep in his house another night. He a gentleman!'

Farmer Gray was delighted by Stafford's generous indignation; which appeared the more striking, as his manner was usually sober, and remarkably civil.

All this happened at two o'clock in the afternoon; and the evening of the same day he returned to Rosanna. Rose was sitting at work, in the seat of the cottage window. When she saw him at the little white gate, her colour gave notice to her brothers who was coming, and they ran out to meet him.

'You ought to shut your doors against me now, instead of running out to meet me,' said he; 'for I am not clear that I have a farthing in the world, except what is in this portmanteau. I have been fool enough to leave all I have earned in the hands of *a gentleman*, who can give me only his bond for my wages. But I am glad I am out of his house, at any rate.'

'And I am glad you are in mine,' said farmer Gray, receiving him with a warmth of hospitality which brought tears of gratitude into Stafford's eyes. Rose smiled upon her father, and said nothing; but set him his arm-chair, and was very busy arranging the tea-table. Mrs. Gray beckoned to her guest, and made him sit down beside her; telling him he should have as good tea at Rosanna as ever he had in Warwickshire; 'and out of Staffordshire ware, too,' said she, taking her best Wedgwood teacups and saucers out of a cupboard.

Robin, who was naturally gay and fond of rallying his friends, could not forbear affecting to express his surprise at Stafford's preferring an Irishwoman, of all women in the world. 'Are you quite sure, Stafford,' said he, 'that you are not mistaken? Are you sure my sister has not wings on her shoulders?'

'Have you done now, Robin?' said his mother; who saw that Stafford was a good deal abashed, and had no answer ready. 'If Mr. Stafford had a prejudice against us Irish, so much the more honourable for my Rose

to have conquered it; and, as to wings, they would have been no shame to us natives, supposing we had them; and of course it was no affront to attribute them to us. Have not the angels themselves wings?'

A timely joke is sometimes a real blessing; and so Stafford felt it at this instant: his bashfulness vanished by degrees, and Robin rallied him no more. 'I had no idea,' said he, 'how easy it is to put an Englishman out of countenance in the company of his mistress.'

This was a most happy evening at Rosanna. After Rose retired, which she soon did, to see after the household affairs, her father spoke in the kindest manner to Stafford. 'Mr. Stafford,' said he, 'if you tell me that you are able to maintain my girl in the way of life she is in now, you shall have her: this, in my opinion and in hers, is the happiest life for those who have been bred to it. I would rather see Rose matched to an honest, industrious, good-humoured man, like yourself, whom she can love, than see her the wife of a man as grand as Sir Hyacinth O'Brien. For, to the best of my opinion, it is not the being born to a great estate that can make a man content or even rich: I think myself a richer man this minute than Sir Hyacinth; for I owe no man anything, am my own master, and can give a little matter both to child and stranger. But your head is very naturally running upon Rose, and not upon my moralising. All I have to say is, win her and wear her; and, as to the rest, even if Sir Hyacinth never pays you your own, that shall not stop your wedding. My sons are good lads, and you and Rose shall never want, whilst the mill of Rosanna is going.'

This generosity quite overpowered Stafford. Generosity is one of the characteristics of the Irish. It not only touched but surprised the Englishman, who, amongst the same rank of his own countrymen, had been accustomed to strict honesty in their dealings, but seldom to this warmth of friendship and forgetfulness of all selfish considerations. It was some minutes before he could articulate a syllable; but, after shaking his intended father-in-law's hand with that violence which expresses so much to English feelings, he said, 'I thank you heartily; and, if I live to the age of Methusalem, shall never forget this. A friend in need is a friend indeed. But I will not live upon yours or your good sons' earnings; that would not be fair dealing, or like what I've been bred up to think handsome. It is a sad thing for me that this master of mine can give me nothing for my seven years' service, but this scrap of paper (taking out of his pocket-book a bond of Sir Hyacinth's). But my mother, though she has her prejudices, and is very stiff about them, being an elderly woman, and never going out of England, or even beyond the parish in which she was born, yet she is kind-hearted; and I cannot think will refuse to help me, or that she will cross me in marriage, when she knows the thing is determined; so I shall write to her before I sleep, and wish I could but enclose in the cover of my letter the picture of Rose, which would be better than

all I could say. But no picture would do her justice. I don't mean a compliment, like those Sir Hyacinth paid to her face, but only the plain truth. I mean that a picture could never make my mother understand how good, and sweet-tempered, and modest, Rose is. Mother has a world of prejudices; but she is a good woman, and will prove herself so to me, I make no doubt.'

Stafford wrote to his mother a long letter, and received, in a fortnight afterwards, this short answer: —

'Son George — I warned you not to fall in love with an Irishwoman, to which I told you I could never give my consent.

'As you bake, so you must brew. Your sister Dolly is marrying too, and setting up a shop in Warwick, by my advice and consent: all the money I can spare I must give, as in reason, to her who is a dutiful child; and mean, with her and grandchildren, if God please, to pass my latter days, as fitting, in this parish of Little Sonchy, in Old England, where I was born and bred. Wishing you may not repent, or starve, or so forth, which please to let me know, I am your affectionate mother,

'Dorothy Stafford.'

All Stafford's hopes were confounded by this letter: he put it into farmer Gray's hands, without saying a word; then drew his chair away from Rose hid his face in his hands, and never spoke or heard one word that was saying round about him for full half an hour; till, at last, he was roused by his friend Robin, who, clapping him on his back, said, 'Come, Stafford, English pride won't do with us; this is all to punish you for refusing to share and share alike with us in the mill of Rosanna, which is what you must and shall do now, for Rose's sake, if not for ours or your own. Come, say done.'

Stafford could not help being moved. All the family, except Rose, joined in these generous entreaties; and her silence said even more than their words. Dinner was on the table before this amicable contest was settled, and Robin insisted upon his drinking a toast with him, in Irish ale; which was 'Rose Gray, and Rosanna mill.'

The glass was just filled and the toast pronounced, when in came one of Gray's workmen, in an indescribable perspiration and rage.

'Master Robin, Master John! Master,' cried he, 'we are all ruined! The mill and all —'

'The mill!' exclaimed everybody, starting up.

'Ay, the mill: it's all over with it, and with us: not a turn more will Rosanna mill ever take for me or you; not a turn,' continued he, wiping his forehead with his arm, and hiding by the same motion his eyes, which ran over with tears.

'It's all that thief Hopkins's doing. May every guinea he touches, and every shilling, and tester, and penny itself, blister his fingers, from this day forward and for evermore!'

'But what has he done to the mill?'

'May every guinea, shilling, tester, and penny he looks upon, from this day forth for evermore, be a blight to his eyes, and a canker to his heart! But I can't wish him a worse canker than what he has there already. Yes, he has a canker at heart! Is not he eaten up with envy? as all who look at him may read in that evil eye. Bad luck to the hour when it fixed on the mill of Rosanna!'

'But what has he done to the mill? Take it patiently, and tell us quietly,' said farmer Gray, 'and do not curse the man any more.'

'Not curse the man! Take it quietly, master! Is it the time to take it quietly, when he is at the present minute carrying off every drop of water from our mill-course? so he is, the villain!'

At these words, Stafford seized his oak stick, and sprang towards the door. Robin and John eagerly followed: but, as they passed their father, he laid a hand on each, and called to Stafford to stop. At his respected voice they all paused. 'My children,' said he, 'what are you going to do? No violence. No violence. You shall have justice, boys, depend upon it; we will not let ourselves be oppressed. If Mr. Hopkins were ten times as great, and twenty times as tyrannical as he is, we shall have justice; the law will reach him: but we must take care and do nothing in anger. Therefore, I charge you, let me speak to him, and do you keep your tempers whatever passes. Maybe, all this is only a mistake: perhaps Mr. Hopkins is only making drains for his own meadow; or, maybe, is going to flood it, and does not know, till we tell him, that he is emptying out our water-course.'

'He can't but know it! He can't but know it! He's 'cute enough, and too 'cute,' muttered Paddy, as he led the way to the mill. Stafford and the two brothers followed their father respectfully; admiring his moderation, and resolving to imitate it if they possibly could.

Mr. Hopkins was stationed cautiously on the boundary of his own land. 'There he is, mounted on the back of the ditch, enjoying the mischief all he can!' cried Paddy. 'And hark! He is whistling, whilst our stream is running away from us. May I never cross myself again, if I would not, rather than the best shirt ever I had to my back, push him into the mud, as he deserves, this very minute! And, if it wasn't for my master here, it's what I'd do, before I drew breath again.'

Farmer Gray restrained Paddy's indignation with some difficulty; and advancing calmly towards Mr. Hopkins, he remonstrated with him in a mild tone. 'Surely, Mr. Hopkins,' said he, 'you cannot mean to do us such an injury as to stop our mill?'

'I have not laid a finger on your mill,' replied Hopkins, with a malicious smile. 'If your man there,' pointing to Paddy, 'could prove my having laid a finger upon it, you might have your action of trespass; but I am no trespasser; I stand on my own land, and have a right to water my

own meadow; and moreover have witnesses to prove that, for ten years last past, while the mill of Rosanna was in Simon O'Dougherty's hands, the water-course was never full, and the mill was in disuse. The stream runs against you now, and so does the law, gentlemen. I have the best counsel's opinion in Ireland to back me. Take your remedy, when and where you can find it. Good morning to you.'

Without listening to one word more, Mr. Hopkins hastily withdrew: for he had no small apprehensions that Paddy, whose threats he had overheard, and whose eyes sparkled with rage, might execute upon him that species of prompt justice which no quibbling can evade.

'Do not be disheartened, my dear boys,' said farmer Gray to his sons, who were watching with mournful earnestness the slackened motion of their water-wheel. 'Saddle my horse for me, John; and get yourselves ready, both of you, to come with me to Counsellor Molyneux.'

'Oh, father,' said John, 'there is no use in going to him; for he is one of the candidates, you know, and Mr. Hopkins has a great many votes.'

'No matter for that,' said Gray: 'Mr. Molyneux will do justice; that is my opinion of him. If he was another sort of man, I would not trouble myself to go near him, nor stoop to ask his advice: but my opinion of him is, that he is above doing a dirty action, for votes or anything else; and I am convinced his own interest will not weigh a grain of dust in the balance against justice. Saddle the horses, boy.'

His sons saddled the horses; and all the way the farmer was riding he continued trying to keep up the spirits of his sons, by assurances that if Counsellor Molyneux would take their affair in hand, there would be an end of all difficulty.

'He is not one of those justices of the peace,' continued he, 'who will huddle half a dozen poor fellows into jail without law or equity. He is not a man who goes into Parliament saying one thing, and who comes out saying another. He is not, like our friend Sir Hyacinth O'Brien, forced to sell tongue, and brains, and conscience, to keep his head above water. In short, he is a man who dares to be the same, and can moreover afford to be the same, at election time as at any other time; for which reason, I dare to go to him now in this our distress, although I have to complain of a man who has forty-six votes, which is the number, they say, Mr. Hopkins can command.'

Whilst farmer Gray was thus pronouncing a panegyric on Counsellor Molyneux, for the comfort of John and Robin, Stafford was trying to console Rose and her mother, who were struck with sorrow and dismay at the news of the mill's being stopped. Stafford had himself almost as much need of consolation as they; for he foresaw it was impossible he should at present be united to his dear Rose. All that her generous brothers had to offer was a share in the mill. The father had his farm, but this must serve for the support of the whole family; and how could

Stafford become a burden to them, now that they would be poor, when he could not bring himself to be dependent upon them, even when they were, comparatively speaking, rich?

Chapter V

With anxious hearts the little party at the cottage expected the return of the father and his sons. Rose sat at the window watching for them: her mother laid down her knitting, and sighed: and Stafford was silent, for he had exhausted all his consolatory eloquence, and saw and felt it had no effect.

'Here they come! But they ride so slow, that I am sure they bring us no good news.'

No: there was not any good news. Counsellor Molyneux had indeed behaved as well as man could do: he had declared that he would undertake to manage and plead their cause in any court of justice on earth; and had expressed the strongest indignation against the villainy of Hopkins; but as the same time, he had fairly told the Grays that this litigious man, if they commenced a suit, might ruin them, by law, before they could recover their rights.

'So we may go to bed this night melancholy enough,' said Robin; 'with the certainty that our mill is stopped, and that we have a long lawsuit to go through, before we can see it going again — if ever we do.'

Rose and Stafford looked at one another, and sighed.

'We had better not go to law, to lose the little we have left, at any rate,' said Mrs. Gray.

'Wife, I am determined my boys shall have justice,' said the father firmly. 'I am not fond of law, God knows! I never had a lawsuit in my life; nobody dreads such things more than I do; but I dread nothing in defence of my sons and justice. Whilst I have a penny left in the world, I'll spend it to obtain them justice. The labour of their lives shall not be in vain; they shall not be robbed of all they have: they shall not be trampled upon by any one living, let him be ever so rich, or ever so litigious. I fear neither his money nor his quirks of law. Plain sense is the same for him and for me; and justice my boys shall have. Mr. Molyneux will plead our cause himself — I desire no more. If we fail and are ruined, our ruin be upon the head of him who works it! I shall die content, when I have done all I can to obtain justice for my children.'

As soon as these facts were known, everybody in the neighbourhood felt extreme indignation against Hopkins; and all joined in pitying the two brothers, and applauding the spirit of their father. There was not an individual who did not wish that Hopkins might be punished; but he had been engaged in so many lawsuits, and had been so successful in screening himself from justice, and in ruining his opponents, that everybody feared the Grays, though they were so much in the right, would never be able to

make this appear, according to the forms of law: many, therefore, advised that it might not be brought to trial: but farmer Gray persisted, and Counsellor Molyneux steadily abided by his word, and declared he would plead the cause himself.

Mr. Hopkins sent the Counsellor a private hint, that if he directly or indirectly protected the Grays, he must give up all hopes of the forty-six votes which, as the county was now nearly balanced, must turn the election. Mr. Molyneux paid no attention to this hint; but, the very day on which he received it, visited farmer Gray in his cottage, walked with him to Rosanna mill, and settled how the suit should be carried on.

Hopkins swore he would spare no expense to humble the pride both of the Grays and their protector: an unexpected circumstance, however, occurred. It had often been prophesied by Mr. Molyneux, who knew the species of bargains which Hopkins drove with all manner of people by whose distresses he could make money, that he would sooner or later overshoot his mark, as cunning persons often do. Mr. Molyneux predicted that, amongst the medley of his fraudulent purchases, he would at length be the dupe of some unsound title; and that, amongst the multitudes whom he ruined, he would at last meet with some one who would ruin him. The person who was the means of accomplishing this prophecy was indeed the last that would have been guessed — soft Simon O'Dougherty! In dealing with him, Mr. Hopkins, who thoroughly despised indolent honesty, was quite off his guard; and, in truth, poor Simon had no design to cheat him: but it happened that the lease, which he made over to Hopkins, as his title to the field that he sold, was a lease renewable for ever; with a strict clause, binding the lessee to renew, within a certain time after the failure of each life, under penalty of forfeiting the lease. From the natural laziness of easy Simon, he had neglected to renew, and had even forgotten that the life was dropped: he assigned his lease over a bottle to Mr. Hopkins, who seized it with avidity, lest he should lose the lucky moment to conclude a bargain in which, he thought, he had at once overreached Simon, and had secured to himself the means of wreaking his vengeance upon the Grays. This lease was of the field adjoining to Rosanna mill; and by the testimony of some old people in the neighbourhood, he fancied he could prove that this meadow was anciently flooded, and that the mill-course had gone into disuse. In all his subsequent operations, he had carefully kept himself, as he thought, upon his own lands; but, now that a suit against him was instituted, it was necessary to look to his own title, into which he knew Mr. Molyneux would examine.

Upon reading over the lease assigned to him by Simon, he noticed the strict clause binding the tenant to renew within a certain time. A qualm came over him! He was astonished at himself for not having more carefully perused the lease before he concluded the bargain. Had it been with any one but soft Simon, this could not have happened. He hastened in

search of Simon with the utmost anxiety, to inquire whether all the lives were in being. Simon at first said he had such a mist over his memory that he could not exactly recollect who the lives were; but at last he made out that one of them had been dead beyond the time for renewal. The gentleman, his landlord, he said, was in Dublin; and he had neglected, sure enough, to write to him from post to post.

The rage of Mr. Hopkins was excessive: he grew white with anger! Easy Simon yawned, and begged him not to take the thing so to heart: 'for, after all,' said he, 'you know the loss must be mine. I can't make good the sale of this field to you, as I have lost it by my own carelessness: but that's nothing to you; for you know, as well as I do, that to make good the deficiency, you will, somehow or other, get a better piece of ground out of the small remains of patrimony I have left, God help me!'

'God help *you*, indeed!' cried Hopkins, with a look and accent of mingled rage and contempt. 'I tell you, man, the loss is mine; and no other land you have, to sell or give, can make me any amends. I shall lose my lawsuit.'

'Wheugh! wheugh! Why, so much the better. Where's the use of having lawsuits? The loss of such bad things can never be great.'

'No trifling, pray,' said Hopkins, with impatience, as he walked up and down the room, and repeatedly struck his forehead.

'Ho! ho! ho! I begin to comprehend. I know whereabouts you are now,' cried Simon. 'Is not it the Grays you are thinking of? Ah, that's the suit you are talking about. But now, Mr. Hopkins, you ought to rejoice, as I do, instead of grieving, that it is out of your power to ruin that family; for, in truth, they are good people, and have the voice of the country with them against you; and if you were to win your suit twenty times over, that would still be the same. You would never be able to show your face; and, for my own part, my conscience would never forgive me for being instrumental, unknown to myself, in giving you the power to do this mischief. And, after all, what put it into your head to stop Rosanna mill, when its going gave you no trouble in life?'

Hopkins, who had not listened to one syllable Simon was saying, at this instant suddenly stopped walking; and, in a soft insinuating voice, addressed him in these words:

'Mr. O'Dougherty, you know I have a great regard for you.'

'Maybe so,' said Simon; 'though that is more than I ever knew you to have for anybody.'

'Pray be serious. I tell you I have, and will prove it.'

'That is more and more surprising, Mr. Hopkins.'

'And, which is more surprising still, I will make your fortune, if you will do a trifling kindness for me.'

'Anything in nature, that won't give me an unreasonable deal of trouble.'

'Oh, this will give you no sort of trouble,' said Hopkins. 'I will get you,

before this day se'nnight, that place in the revenue that you have been wishing for so long, and that Sir Hyacinth O'Brien will never get for you. I say I will ensure it to you under my hand, this minute, if you will do what I want of you.'

'To be sure I will, if it's no trouble. What is it?'

'Only just,' said Hopkins, hesitating; 'only just —— You must remember — you cannot but recollect that you wrote to your landlord, to offer to renew?'

'I remember to recollect no such thing,' said Simon, surprised.

'Yes, yes,' said Hopkins; 'but he gave you no answer, you know.'

'But, I tell you, I never wrote to him at all.'

'Pshaw! You have a bad memory, Simon; and your letter might have miscarried. There's nothing simpler than that; nothing more easily said.'

'If it were but true,' said Simon.

'True or not, it may be said, you know.'

'Not by Simon O'Dougherty, Mr. Hopkins.'

'Look you, Mr. O'Dougherty, I have a great regard for you,' continued Hopkins, holding him fast, and producing a pocket-book full of bank-notes. I must, thought he, come up to this scoundrel's price, for he has me now. He is more knave than fool, I see. 'Let us understand one another, my good friend Simon. Name your sum, and make me but a short affidavit, purporting that you did apply for this renewal, and you have your place in the revenue snug besides.'

'You don't know whom you are speaking to, Mr. Hopkins,' said Simon, looking over his shoulder, with cool and easy contempt. 'The O'Doughertys are not accustomed to perjuring themselves; and it's a trouble I would not take for any man, if he were my own father even; no, not for all the places in the revenue that ever were created, nor for all the bank-notes ever you cheated mankind out of, Mr. Hopkins, into the bargain. No offence. I never talked of cheating, till you named perjury to me; for which I do not kick you downstairs, in the first place, because there are no stairs, I believe, to my house; next, because, if there were ever so many, it would be beneath me to make use of them upon any such occasion; and, lastly, it would be quite too much trouble. Now we comprehend one another perfectly, I hope, Mr. Hopkins.'

Cursing himself, and overwhelmed with confusion, Mr. Hopkins withdrew. Proud of himself, and having a story to tell, Simon O'Dougherty hastened to Rosanna, to relate all that had happened to the Grays, and to congratulate them, as he said, upon his own carelessness.

The joy with which they listened to Simon's story was great, and in proportion to the anxiety they had suffered. In less than half an hour's time, they received a mean, supplicating letter from Hopkins, entreating they would not ruin his reputation, and all his prospects in life, by divulging what had passed; and promising that the mill-stream of Rosanna should be returned to its proper channel, without any expense to them,

and that he would make a suitable compensation in money, if they would bind themselves to secrecy.

It will easily be guessed that they rejected all his offers with disdain: the whole affair was told by them to Mr. Molyneux, and the next day all the neighbourhood knew it, and triumphed in the detection of a villain, who had long been the oppressor of the poor. The neighbours all joined in restoring the water to the mill-course; and when Rosanna mill was once more at work, the village houses were illuminated, and even the children showed their sympathy for the family of the Grays, by huge bonfires and loud huzzas.

Simon O'Dougherty's landlord was so much pleased by the honesty he had shown in this affair, that he renewed the lease of the meadow, instead of insisting upon the forfeiture; and farmer Gray delighted poor Simon still more, by promising to overlook for him the management of the land which still remained in his possession.

In the meantime, Mr. Hopkins, who could not go out of his own house without being insulted, or without fearing to be insulted, prepared to quit the country. 'But before I go,' said he, 'I shall have the pleasure and triumph, at least, of making Mr. Molyneux lose his election.'

The Grays feared Mr. Molyneux would indeed be a sufferer for the generous protection he had afforded them in their distress. The votes were nearly balanced in the county, and the forty-six votes which Hopkins could command would decide the contest. There are often in real life instances of what is called poetical justice. The day before the election, Sir Hyacinth was arrested at the suit of Stafford, who chose his opportunity so well, that the sheriff, though he was a fast friend of the baronet's, could not refuse to do his duty. The sheriff had such a number of writs immediately put into his hands, that bail could not be found; and Mr. Molyneux was elected without opposition.

But let us return, from the misery of arrests and elections, to peace, industry, family union, and love, in the happy cottage of Rosanna. No obstacles now prevented the marriage of Stafford and Rose; it was celebrated with every simple demonstration of rural felicity. The bride had the blessings of her fond father and mother, the congratulations of her beloved brothers, and the applause of her own heart. Are not these better things than even forty fine wedding gowns, or a coach of Hatchett's best workmanship? Rose thought so, and her future life proved she was not much mistaken. Stafford some time after his marriage took his wife to England, to see his mother, who was soon reconciled to him and her Irish daughter-in-law, whose gentle manners and willing obedience overcame her unreasonable dislike. Old Mrs. Stafford declared to her son, when he was returning, that she had so far got the better of what he called her prejudices, that, if she could but travel to Ireland without crossing the sea, she verily believed she would go and spend a year with him and the Grays at Rosanna.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

(1811–1863)

William Makepeace Thackeray, born at Calcutta in 1811, was brought to England at the age of four. He was educated first at the Charterhouse School, and later went to Cambridge, but remained there for only a year. After a year's travel on the Continent, he returned to London, and after studying for the law, gave that up and went into journalism. Some years later he became a regular contributor to *Fraser's Magazine* and *Punch*. In 1847 he began the serial publication of his novel *Vanity Fair*, which was immensely popular. From that time to the end of his life he continued to write novels, stories, and a large quantity of miscellaneous essays and sketches.

Among Thackeray's shorter works there are few so characteristic of his style and the temper of his mind than *The Bedford-Row Conspiracy*. The tale originally appeared in London in 1841, and is now reprinted from the volume, *A Shabby Genteel Story and Other Tales*, New York, 1852.

THE BEDFORD-ROW CONSPIRACY

Chapter I

OF THE LOVES OF MR. PERKINS AND MISS GORDON, AND OF THE TWO GREAT FACTIONS IN THE TOWN OF OLDBOROUGH.

"MY DEAR John," cried Lucy, with a very wise look indeed, "it must and shall be so. As for Doughty-street, with our means, a house is out of the question. We must keep three servants, and aunt Biggs says the taxes are one-and-twenty pounds a year."

"I have seen a sweet place at Chelsea," remarked John; "Paradise-row, No. 17, — garden — greenhouse — fifty pounds a year — omnibus to town within a mile."

"What, that I may be left alone all day, and you spend a fortune in driving backward and forward in those horrid breakneck cabs? My darling, I should die there — die of fright, I know I should. Did you not say yourself that the road was not as yet lighted, and that the place swarmed with public-houses and dreadful tipsy Irish bricklayers? Would you kill me, John?"

"My da — arling," said John, with tremendous fondness, clutching Miss Lucy suddenly round the waist, and rapping the hand of that young person violently against his waistcoat, — "my — da — arling, don't say

such things, even in joke. If I objected to the chambers, it is only because you, my love, with your birth and connections, ought to have a house of your own. The chambers are quite large enough, and certainly quite good enough for me." And so after some more sweet parley on the part of these young people, it was agreed that they should take up their abode, when married, in a part of the house, number one hundred and something, Bedford-row.

It will be necessary to explain to the reader, that John was no other than John Perkins, Esq., of the Middle Temple, barrister-at-law, and that Miss Lucy was the daughter of the late Captain Gorgon, and Marianne Biggs, his wife. The captain being of noble connections, younger son of a baronet, cousin to Lord X., and related to the Y. family, had angered all his relatives, by marrying a very silly, pretty young woman, who kept a ladies' school at Canterbury. She had six hundred pounds to her fortune, which the captain laid out in the purchase of a sweet travelling-carriage and dressing-case for himself; and going abroad with his lady, spent several years in the principal prisons of Europe, in one of which he died. His wife and daughter were meantime supported by the contributions of Mrs. Jemima Biggs, who still kept the ladies' school.

At last a dear old relative — such a one as one reads of in romances — died and left seven thousand pounds apiece to the two sisters, whereupon the elder gave up schooling and retired to London; and the younger managed to live with some comfort and decency at Brussels, upon two hundred and ten pounds per annum. Mrs. Gorgon never touched a shilling of her capital, for the very good reason that it was placed entirely out of her reach; so that when she died, her daughter found herself in possession of a sum of money that is not always to be met with in this world.

Her aunt, the baronet's lady and her aunt, the ex-schoolmistress, both wrote very pressing invitations to her, and she resided with each for six months after her arrival in England. Now, for a second time, she had come to Mrs. Biggs, Caroline-place, Mecklenburgh-square. It was under the roof of that respectable old lady, that John Perkins, Esq., being invited to take tea, wooed and won Miss Gorgon.

Having thus described the circumstances of Miss Gorgon's life, let us pass for a moment from that young lady, and lift up the veil of mystery which envelopes the deeds and character of Perkins.

Perkins, too was an orphan; and he and his Lucy, of summer evenings, when Sol descending lingered fondly yet about the minarets of the Foundling, and gilded the grassplots of Mecklenburgh-square — Perkins, I say, and Lucy would often sit together in the summer-house of that pleasure-ground, and muse upon the strange coincidences of their life. Lucy was motherless and fatherless; so, too, was Perkins. If Perkins was brotherless and sisterless, was not Lucy likewise an only child? Perkins was twenty-three — his age and Lucy's united, amounted to forty-six; and it was to be

remarked, as a fact still more extraordinary, that while Lucy's relatives were *aunts*, John's were *uncles;* mysterious spirit of love! — let us treat thee with respect and whisper not too many of thy secrets. The fact is, John and Lucy were a pair of fools (as every young couple *ought* to be who have hearts that are worth a farthing), and were ready to find coincidences, sympathies, hidden gushes of feeling, mystic unions of the soul, and what not, in every single circumstance that occurred from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, and in the intervals. Bedford-row, where Perkins lived, is not very far from Mecklenburgh-square; and John used to say, that he felt a comfort that his house and Lucy's were served by the same muffin-man.

Further comment is needless. A more honest, simple, clever, warm-hearted, soft, whimsical, romantical, high-spirited young fellow than John Perkins did not exist. When his father, Dr. Perkins, died, this, his only son, was placed under the care of John Perkins, Esq., of the house of Perkins, Scully, and Perkins, those celebrated attorneys in the trading town of Oldborough, which the second partner, William Pitt Scully, Esq., represented in parliament and in London.

All John's fortune was the house in Bedford-row, which, at his father's death, was let out into chambers, and brought in a clear hundred a-year. Under his uncle's roof at Oldborough, where he lived with thirteen red-haired male and female cousins, he was only charged fifty pounds for board, clothes and pocket-money, and the remainder of his rents was carefully put by for him until his majority. When he approached that period — when he came to belong to two spouting clubs at Oldborough, among the young merchants and lawyers'-clerks — to blow the flute nicely, and play a good game at billiards — to have written one or two smart things in the Oldborough Sentinel — to be fond of smoking (in which act he was discovered by his fainting aunt at three o'clock one morning) — in one word, when John Perkins arrived at manhood, he discovered that he was quite unfit to be an attorney, that he detested all the ways of his uncle's stern, dull, vulgar, regular, red-headed family, and he vowed that he would go to London and make his fortune. Thither he went, his aunt and cousins, who were all "serious," vowing that he was a lost boy, and when his history opens, John had been two years in the metropolis, inhabiting his own garrets; and a very nice compact set of apartments, looking into the back-garden, at this moment falling vacant, the prudent Lucy Gorgon had visited them, and vowed that she and her John should there commence housekeeping.

All these explanations are tedious, but necessary; and furthermore, it must be said, that as John's uncle's partner was the liberal member for Oldborough, so Lucy's uncle was its ministerial representative.

This gentleman, the brother of the deceased Captain Gorgon, lived at the paternal mansion of Gorgon Castle, and rejoiced in the name and title

of Sir John Grimbsy Gorgon. He, too, like his younger brother, had married a lady beneath his own rank in life: having espoused the daughter and heiress of Mr. Hicks, the great brewer at Oldborough, who held numerous mortgages on the Gorgon property, all of which he yielded up, together with his daughter Eliza, to the care of the baronet.

What Lady Gorgon was in character, this history will show. In person, if she may be compared to any vulgar animal, one of her father's heavy, healthy broad-flanked, Roman-nosed, white dray-horses, might, to the poetic mind, appear to resemble her. At twenty she was a splendid creature, and though not at her full growth, yet remarkable for strength and sinew: at forty-five she was as fine a woman as any in his majesty's dominions. Five feet seven in height, thirteen stone, her own teeth and hair, she looked as if she were the mother of a regiment of grenadier-guards. She had three daughters of her own size, and at length, ten years after the birth of the last of the young ladies, a son — one son — George Augustus Frederic Grimbsy Gorgon, the godson of a royal duke, whose steady officer in waiting Sir George had been for many years.

It is needless to say, after entering so largely into a description of Lady Gorgon, that her husband was a little, shrivelled, weazel-faced creature, eight inches shorter than her ladyship. This is the way of the world, as every single reader of this book must have remarked; for frolic love delights to join giants and pigmies of different sexes in the bonds of matrimony. When you saw her ladyship, in flame-coloured satin, and gorgeous toque and feathers, entering the drawing-room, as footmen along the stairs shouted melodiously, Sir George and Lady Gorgon, you beheld in her company a small withered old gentleman, with powder and large royal household buttons, who tripped at her elbow as a little weak-legged colt does at the side of a stout mare.

The little General had been present at about a hundred and twenty pitch-battles on Hounslow Heath and Wormwood Scrubs, but had never drawn his sword against an enemy. As might be expected, therefore, his talk and *tenue* were outrageously military. He had the whole army-list by heart — that is, as far as the field-officers — all below them he scorned. A bugle at Gorgon Castle always sounded at breakfast and dinner: a gun announced sunset. He clung to his pigtail for many years after the army had forsaken that ornament, and could never be brought to think much of the Peninsular men for giving it up. When he spoke of the duke, he used to call him "*My Lord Wellington — I recollect him as Captain Wesley.*" He swore fearfully in conversation — was most regular at church, and regularly read to his family and domestics the morning and evening prayer; he bullied his daughters, *seemed* to bully his wife, who led him whither she chose; gave grand entertainments, and never asked a friend by chance; had splendid liveries, and starved his people; and was as dull, stingy, pompous, insolent, cringing, ill-tempered a little creature as ever was known.

With such qualities you may fancy that he was generally admired in society and by his country. So he was: and I never knew a man so endowed whose way through life was not safe — who had fewer pangs of conscience — more positive enjoyments — more respect shown to him — more favours granted to him, than such a one as my friend the General.

Her ladyship was just suited to him, and they did in reality admire each other hugely. Previously to her marriage with the baronet, many love-passages had passed between her and William Pitt Scully, Esq., the attorney, and there was especially one story, *apropos* of certain syllabubs and Sally-Lunn cakes, which seemed to show that matters had gone very far. Be this as it may, no sooner did the General (Major Gorgon he was then) cast an eye on her, than Scully's five years fabric of love was instantly dashed to the ground. She cut him pitilessly, cut Sally Scully, his sister, her dearest friend and confidante, and bestowed her big person upon the little aide-de-camp at the end of a fortnight's wooing. In the course of time, their mutual fathers died; the Gorgon estates were unencumbered: patron of both the seats in the borough of Oldborough, and occupant of one, Sir George Grimbsy Gorgon, baronet, was a personage of no small importance.

He was, it scarcely need be said, a Tory; and this was the reason why William Pitt Scully, Esq., of the firm of Perkins and Scully, deserted those principles in which he had been bred and christened; deserted that church which he had frequented, for he could not bear to see Sir John and my lady flaunting in their grand pew; — deserted, I say, the church, adopted the conventicle, and became one of the most zealous and eloquent supporters that Freedom has known in our time. Scully, of the House of Scully and Perkins, was a dangerous enemy. In five years from that marriage, which snatched from the jilted solicitor his heart's young affections, Sir George Gorgon found that he must actually spend seven hundred pounds to keep his two seats. At the next election, a liberal was set up against his man, and actually run him hard; and finally, at the end of eighteen years, the rejected Scully — the mean attorney — was actually the *first* member for Oldborough, Sir George Grimbsy Gorgon, Baronet, being only the second!

The agony of that day cannot be imagined — the dreadful curses of Sir George, who saw fifteen hundred a year robbed from under his very nose — the religious resignation of my lady — the hideous window-smashing that took place at the Gorgon Arms, and the discomfiture of the pelted mayor and corporation. The very next Sunday, Scully was reconciled to the church (or attended it in the morning, and the meeting twice in the afternoon), and as Doctor Shorter uttered the prayer for the high court of parliament, his eye — the eye of his whole party — turned towards Lady Gorgon and Sir George in a most unholy triumph. Sir George (who always stood during prayers, like a military man,) fairly sunk down among

the hassocks, and Lady Gorgon was heard to sob as audibly as ever did little beadle-belaboured urchin.

Scully, when at Oldborough, came from that day forth to church. "What," said he, "was it to him? were we not all brethren?" Old Perkins, however, kept religiously to the Squaretoes' congregation. In fact, to tell the truth, this subject had been debated between the partners, who saw the advantage of courting both the establishment and the dissenters — a manœuvre which, I need not say, is repeated in almost every country town in England, where a solicitor's house has this kind of power and connexion.

Three months after this election came the races at Oldborough, and the race-ball. Gorgon was so infuriated by this defeat, that he gave "the Gorgon cup and cover," a matter of fifteen pounds. Scully, "although anxious," as he wrote from town, "anxious beyond measure to preserve the breed of horses for which our beloved country has ever been famous, could attend no such sports as these, which but too often degenerated into vice." It was voted a shabby excuse. Lady Gorgon was radiant in her barouche and four, and gladly became the patroness of the ball that was to ensue; and which all the gentry and townspeople, Tory and Whig, were in the custom of attending. The ball took place on the last day of the races — on that day, the walls of the market-house, the principal public buildings, and the Gorgon Arms hotel itself, were plastered with the following —

LETTER FROM OUR DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE
WILLIAM P. SCULLY, ESQ., ETC., ETC.

House of Commons, Wednesday, June 9, 18—.

"My dear Heeltap, — You know my opinion about horse-racing, and though I blame neither you nor any brother Englishman who enjoys that manly sport, you will, I am sure, appreciate the conscientious motives which induce me not to appear among my friends and constituents on the festival of the 3d, 4th, and 5th instant. If *I*, however, cannot allow my name to appear among your list of stewards, *one* at least of the representatives of Oldborough has no such scruples. Sir George Gorgon is among you; and though I differ from that honourable baronet on more than *one vital point*, I am glad to think that he is with you — a gentleman, a soldier, a man of property in the county, how can he be better employed than in forwarding the county's amusements, and in forwarding the happiness of all?

"Had I no such scruples as those to which I have just alluded, I must still have refrained from coming among you. Your great Oldborough common-drainage and inclosure bill comes on to-night, and I shall be *at my post*. I am sure, if Sir George Gorgon were here, he and I should on this occasion vote side by side, and that party strife would be forgotten in the object of our common interest — *our dear native town*.

"There is, however, another occasion at hand, in which I shall be proud to meet him. Your ball is on the night of the 6th. Party forgotten — brotherly union — innocent mirth — beauty, *our dear town's beauty*, our daughters in the joy of their expanding loveliness, our matrons in the exquisite contemplation of their children's bliss, — can you, can I, can Whig or Tory, can any Briton be indifferent to a scene like this, or refuse to join in this heart-stirring festival? If there *be* such let them pardon me, — I, for one, my dear Heeltap, will be among you on Friday night, — ay, and hereby invite all pretty Tory Misses, who are in want of a partner.

"I am here in the very midst of good things, you know, and we old folks like a *supper* after a dance. Please to accept a brace of bucks and a turtle, which come herewith. My worthy colleague, who was so liberal last year of his soup to the poor, will not, I trust, refuse to taste a little of Alderman Birch's — 'tis offered on my part with hearty good will. Hey for the 6th, and *vive la joie.*

"Ever, my dear Heeltap, your faithful,

"W. Pitt Scully.

"P.S. Of course this letter is *strictly private.* Say that the venison, &c., came from a *well-wisher to Oldborough.*

This amazing letter was published in defiance of Mr. Scully's injunctions by the enthusiastic Heeltap, who said bluntly in a preface, "That he saw no reason why Mr. Scully should be ashamed of his action, and he, for his part, was glad to let all friends at Oldborough know of it."

The allusion about the Gorgon soup was killing; thirteen paupers in Oldborough had, it was confidently asserted, died of it. Lady Gorgon, on the reading of this letter, was struck completely dumb — Sir George Gorgon was wild — ten dozen of champagne was he obliged to send down to the Gorgon Arms, to be added to the festival. He would have stayed away if he could, but he dared not.

At nine o'clock, he in general's uniform, his wife in blue satin and diamonds, his daughters in blue crape and white roses, his niece, Lucy Gorgon, in white muslin, his son, George Augustus Frederic Grimbsy Gorgon, in a blue velvet jacket, sugar-loaf buttons, and nankeens, entered the north door of the ball-room to much cheering, and the sound of "God save the King!"

At that very same moment, and from the south door, issued William Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P., and his staff. Mr. Scully had a bran-new blue coat and brass buttons, buff waistcoat, white kerseymere tights, pumps with large rosettes, and pink silk stockings.

"This wool," said he to a friend, "was grown on Oldborough sheep, this cloth was spun in Oldborough looms, these buttons were cast in an Oldborough manufactory, these shoes were made by an Oldborough tradesman, this *heart* first beat in Oldborough town, and pray Heaven may be buried there!"

Could any thing resist a man like this? John Perkins, who had come down as one of Scully's aides-de-camp, in a fit of generous enthusiasm, leaped on a whist-table, flung up a pocket-handkerchief, and shrieked — "SCULLY FOR EVER!"

Heeltap, who was generally drunk, fairly burst into tears, and the grave tradesmen and Whig gentry, who had dined with the member at his inn, and accompanied him thence to the Gorgon Arms, lifted their deep voices and shouted, "Hear! Good! Bravo! Noble! Scully for ever! God bless him! and Hurra!"

The scene was tumultuously affecting, and when young Perkins sprung down from the table, and came blushing up to the member, that gentleman said.

"Thank you, Jack! *thank* you, my boy! THANK you," in a way which made Perkins think that his supreme cup of bliss was quaffed, that he had but to die; for that life had no other such joy in store for him. Scully was Perkins's Napoleon — he yielded himself up to the attorney, body and soul.

Whilst this scene was going on under one chandelier of the ball-room; beneath the other, scarlet little General Gorgon, sumptuous Lady Gorgon, the daughter and niece Gorgons were standing, surrounded by their Tory court, who affected to sneer and titter at the Whig demonstrations which were taking place.

"What a howwid thmell of withkey!" lisped Cornet Fitch of the dragoons to Miss Lucy, confidentially; "and thethe are what they call Whigth, are they? he! he!"

"They are drunk, — me — drunk by —— !" said the General to the Mayor.

"*Which* is Scully?" said Lady Gorgon, lifting her glass gravely (she was at that very moment thinking of the syllabubs). "Is it that tipsy man in the green coat, or that vulgar creature in the blue one?"

"Law, my lady!" said the Mayoress; "have you forgotten him? Why that's him in blue and buff."

"And a monthous fine man too," said Cornet Fitch; I wish we had him in our twoop — he'th thix feet thwee, if he'th an inch; ain't he, genewal?"

No reply.

"And Heavens! mamma," shrieked the three Gorgons in a breath, "see, one creature is on the whist-table. Oh, the wretch!"

"I'm sure he's very good looking," said Lucy, simply.

Lady Gorgon darted at her an angry look, and was about to say something very contemptuous, when, at that instant, John Perkins's shout taking effect, Master George Augustus Frederic Grimbsy Gorgon, not knowing better, incontinently raised a small shout on his side.

"Hear! good! bravo!" exclaimed he! "Scully for ever! Hurra-a-a-ay!" and fell skipping about like the Whigs opposite.

"Silence, you brute, you!" groaned Lady Gorgon; and seizing him by the shirt-frill and coat-collar, carried him away to his nurse, who, with many other maids of the Whig and Tory parties, stood giggling and peeping at the landing place.

Fancy how all these small incidents augmented the heap of Lady Gorgon's anger and injuries! She was a dull phlegmatic woman, for the most part, and contented herself generally with merely despising her neighbours; but oh! what a fine active hatred raged in her bosom for victorious Scully! At this moment Mr. Perkins had finished shaking hands with his Napoleon — Napoleon seemed bent upon some tremendous enterprise. He was looking at Lady Gorgon very hard.

"She's a fine woman," said Scully, thoughtfully; he was still holding the hand of Perkins. And then, after a pause, "Gad! I think I'll try."

"Try what, sir?"

"She's a *deuced* fine woman!" burst out again the tender solicitor. "I *will* go. Springer, tell the fiddlers to strike up."

Springer scuttled across the room, and gave the leader of the band a knowing nod. Suddenly, "God save the King" ceased, and "Sir Roger de Coverley" began. The rival forces eyed each other; Mr. Scully, accompanied by his friend, came forward, looking very red, and fumbling two large kid gloves.

"*He's going to ask me to dance,*" hissed out Lady Gorgon, with a dreadful intuition, and she drew back behind her lord.

"D— it, madam, *then dance* with him!" said the general. "Don't you see that the scoundrel is carrying it all his own way; — him, and — — him, and — — — him." (All of which dashes the reader may fill up with oaths of such strength as may be requisite.")

"General!" cried Lady Gorgon, but could say no more. Scully was before her.

"Madam!" exclaimed the liberal member for Oldborough, "in a moment like this — I say — that is — that on the present occasion — your ladyship — unaccustomed as I am — pooh, psha — *will* your ladyship give me the distinguished honour and pleasure of going down the country-dance with your ladyship?"

An immense heave of her ladyship's ample chest was perceptible. Yards of blond-lace, which might be compared to a foam of the sea, were agitated at the same moment, and by the same mighty emotion. The river of diamonds which flowed round her ladyship's neck, seemed to swell and to shine more than ever. The tall plumes on her ambrosial head bowed down beneath the storm. In other words, Lady Gorgon, in a furious rage, which she was compelled to restrain, trembled, drew up, and bowing majestically said,

"Sir, I shall have much pleasure." With this, she extended her hand. Scully, trembling, thrust forward one of his huge kid gloves, and led her

to the head of the country-dance. John Perkins, who I presume had been drinking pretty freely so as to have forgotten his ordinary bashfulness, looked at the three Gorgons in blue, then at the pretty smiling one in white, and stepping up to her, without the smallest hesitation, asked her if she would dance with him. The young lady smilingly agreed. The great example of Scully and Lady Gorgon was followed by all dancing men and women. Political enmities were forgotten. Whig voters invited Tory voters' wives to the dance. The daughters of Reform accepted the hands of the sons of Conservatives. The reconciliation of the Romans and Sabines was not more touching than this sweet fusion. Whack! whack! Mr. Springer clapped his hands; and the fiddlers adroitly obeying the cheerful signal, began playing "Sir Roger de Coverley" louder than ever.

I do not know by what extraordinary charm (*nescio quâ præter solitum*, &c); but young Perkins, who all his life had hated country-dances, was delighted with this one, and skipped, and laughed, poussetting, crossing, down-the-middling, with his merry little partner, till every one of the better-most sort of the thirty-nine couples had dropped panting away, and till the youngest Miss Gorgon, coming up to his partner, said, in a loud hissing, scornful, whisper, "Lucy, mamma thinks you have danced quite enough with this — this person." And Lucy, blushing, starting back, and looking at Perkins in a very melancholy way, made him a little curtesy, and went off to the Gorgonian party with her cousin. Perkins was too frightened to lead her back to her place — too frightened at first, and then too angry. "Person!" said he: his soul swelled with a desperate republicanism: he went back to his patron more of a radical than ever.

He found that gentleman in the solitary tea-room, pacing up and down before the observant landlady and handmaidens of the Gorgon Arms, wiping his brows, gnawing his fingers — his ears looming over his stiff white shirt-collar, as red as fire. Once more the great man seized John Perkins's hand as the latter came up.

"D— the aristocrats!" roared the ex-follower of Squaretoes.

"And so say I; but what's the matter, sir?"

"What's the matter? — Why, that woman — that infernal, haughty, straight-laced, cold-blooded, brewer's daughter! I loved that woman, sir — I *kissed* that woman, sir, twenty years ago — we were all but engaged, sir — we've walked for hours and hours, sir; us and the governess — I've got a lock of her hair, sir, among my papers now — and to-night, would you believe it? — as soon as she got to the bottom of the set, away she went — not one word would she speak to me all the way down: and when I wanted to lead her to her place, and asked her if she would have a glass of negus, 'Sir,' says she, 'I have done my duty; I bear no malice; but I consider you a traitor to Sir George Gorgon's family — a traitor and an upstart! I consider your speaking to me as a piece of insolent vulgarity, and beg you will leave me to myself!' There's her speech,

sir. Twenty people heard it, and all of her Tory set, too. I'll tell you what, Jack, at the next election I'll put *you* up. Oh! that woman! that woman! — and to think that I love her still!" Here Mr. Scully paused, and fiercely consoled himself by swallowing three cups of Mrs. Rincer's green tea.

The fact is, that Lady Gorgon's passion had completely got the better of her reason. Her ladyship was naturally cold and artificially extremely squeamish, and when this great red-faced enemy of hers, looked tenderly at her through his red little eyes, and squeezed her hand, and attempted to renew old acquaintance, she felt such an intolerable disgust at his triumph, at his familiarity, and at the remembrance of her own former liking for him, that she gave utterance to the speech above correctly reported. The Tories were delighted with her spirit, and Cornet Fitch, with much glee, told the story to the general; but that officer, who was at whist with some of his friends, flung down his cards, and coming up to his lady, said briefly,

"Madam, you are a fool!"

"I will *not* stay here to be bearded by that disgusting man! — Mr. Fitch, call my people. — Henrietta, bring Miss Lucy from that linendraper with whom she is dancing. I will not stay, General, once for all."

Henrietta ran — she hated her cousin; Cornet Fitch was departing. "Stop, Fitch," said Sir George, seizing him by the arm. — "You are a fool, Lady Gorgon," said he, "and I repeat it — a —— fool! This fellow, Scully, is carrying all before him: he has talked with every body, laughed with every body — and you, with your infernal airs — a brewer's daughter, by ——, must sit like a queen, and not speak to a soul! You've lost me one seat of my borough, with your infernal pride — fifteen hundred a year, by Jove! — and you think you will bully me out of another. No, madam, you *shall* stay, and stay supper too — and the girls shall dance with every cursed chimneysweep and butcher in the room: they shall, confound me!"

Her ladyship saw that it was necessary to submit; and Mr. Springer, the master of the ceremonies was called, and requested to point out some eligible partners for the young ladies. One went off with a Whig auctioneer; another figured in a quadrille with a very liberal apothecary, and the third, Miss Henrietta, remained.

"Hallo! you sir," roared the little general to John Perkins, who was passing by. John turned round and faced him.

"You were dancing with my niece just now — show us your skill now, and dance with one of my daughters. Stand up, Miss Henrietta Gorgon — Mr. What's-your-name?"

"My name," said John, with marked and majestic emphasis, "is PERKINS," and he looked towards Lucy who dared not look again.

"Miss Gorgon — Mr. Perkins. There, now go and dance."

"Mr. Perkins regrets, madam," said John, making a bow to Miss Hen-

rietta, "that he is not able to dance this evening. I am this moment obliged to look to the supper, but you will find, no doubt, some other PERSON who will have much pleasure."

"Go to —, sir!" screamed the General, starting up, and shaking his cane.

"Calm yourself, dearest George," said Lady Gorgon, clinging fondly to him. Fitch twiddled his mustaches. Miss Henrietta Gorgon stared with open mouth. The silks of the surrounding dowagers rustled — the countenances of all looked grave.

"I will follow you, sir, wherever you please; and you may hear of me whenever you like," said Mr. Perkins, bowing and retiring. He heard little Lucy sobbing in a corner. He was lost at once — lost in love; he felt as if he could combat fifty generals! he never was so happy in his life!

The supper came; but as that meal cost five shillings a head, General Gorgon dismissed the four spinsters of his family homewards in the carriage, and so saved himself a pound. This added to Jack Perkins's wrath; he had hoped to have seen Miss Lucy once more. He was a steward, and, in the General's teeth, would have done his duty. He was thinking how he would have helped her to the most delicate chicken-wings and *blancmanges*, how he *would* have made her take champagne. Under the noses of indignant aunt and uncle, what glorious fun it would have been!

Out of place as Mr. Scully's present was, and though Lady Gorgon and her party sneered at the vulgar notion of venison and turtle for supper, all the world at Oldborough ate very greedily of those two substantial dishes; and the mayor's wife became from that day forth a mortal enemy of the Gorgons: for, sitting near her ladyship, who refused the proffered soup and meat, the mayoress thought herself obliged to follow this disagreeable example. She sent away the plate of turtle with a sigh, saying, however, to the baronet's lady, "I thought, mem, that the *Lord Mayor of London* always had turtle to his supper."

"And what if he didn't, Biddy?" said his honour the mayor; "a good thing's a good thing, and here goes!" wherewith he plunged his spoon into the savoury mess. The mayoress, as we have said, dared not; but she hated Lady Gorgon, and remembered it at the next election.

The pride, in fact, and insolence of the Gorgon party, rendered every person in the room hostile to them; so soon as, gorged with meat, they began to find that courage which Britons invariably derive from their victuals. The show of the Gorgon plate seemed to offend the people. The Gorgon champagne was a long time, too, in making its appearance. Arrive, however, it did; the people were waiting for it. The young ladies not accustomed to that drink, declined pledging their admirers until it was produced; the men, too, despised the bucellas and sherry — and were looking continually towards the door. At last Mr. Rincer, the landlord, Mr. Hock, Sir George's butler, and sundry others, entered the room.

Bang went the corks — fizz the foamy liquor sparkled into all sorts of glasses that were held out for its reception. Mr. Hock helped Sir George and his party, who drank with great gusto: the wine which was administered to the persons immediately around Mr. Scully, was likewise pronounced to be good. But Mr. Perkins, who had taken his seat among the humbler individuals, and in the very middle of the table, observed that all these persons after drinking, made to each other very wry and ominous faces, and whispered much. He tasted his wine — it was a villainous compound of sugar, vitriol, soda, water, and green gooseberries. At this moment a great clatter of forks was made by the president's and vice-president's party. Silence for a toast — 'twas silence all.

"Landlord," said Mr. Perkins, starting up (the rogue, where did his impudence come from?) "have you any champagne of *your own?* "

"Silence! down!" roared the Tories, the ladies looking aghast. "Silence, sit down, you!" shrieked the well-known voice of the General.

"I beg your pardon, General," said young John Perkins; but where *could* you have bought this champagne? My worthy friend I know is going to propose the ladies; let us at any rate drink such a toast in good wine." (Hear, hear!) "Drink her ladyship's health in *this* stuff? I declare to goodness I would sooner drink it in beer!"

No pen can describe the uproar which arose; the anguish of the Gorgonites — the shrieks, jeers, cheers, ironic cries of "Swipes, &c.!" which proceeded from the less genteel, but more enthusiastic Scullyites.

"This vulgarity is too much," said Lady Gorgon, rising; and Mrs. Mayoress, and the ladies of the party did so too.

The General, two squires, the clergyman, the Gorgon apothecary and attorney, with their respective ladies, followed her — they were plainly beaten from the field. Such of the Tories as dared, remained, and in inglorious compromise shared the jovial Whig feast.

"Gentlemen and ladies," hiccupped Mr. Heeltap, "I'll give you a toast, 'Champagne to our real — hic — friends,' no, 'real Champagne to our friends,' and — hic — pooh! 'Champagne to our friends, and real pain to our enemies,' — huzzay!"

The Scully faction on this day bore the victory away, and if the polite reader has been shocked by certain vulgarities on the part of Mr. Scully and his friends, he must remember *imprimis* that Oldborough was an inconsiderable place — that the inhabitants thereof were chiefly tradespeople, not of refined habits — that Mr. Scully himself had only for three months mingled among the aristocracy — that his young friend, Perkins, was violently angry — and finally, and to conclude, that the proud vulgarity of the great Sir George Gorgon and his family, were infinitely more odious and contemptible than the mean vulgarity of the Scullyites and their leader.

Immediately after this event, Mr. Scully and his young friend, Perkins,

returned to town; the latter to his garrets in Bedford-row — the former to his apartments on the first floor of the same house. He lived here to superintend his legal business, of which the London agents, Messrs. Higgs, Biggs & Blatherwick, occupied the ground-floor — the junior partner, Mr. Gustavus Blatherwick, occupying the second-flat of the house. Scully made no secret of his profession or residence — he was an attorney, and proud of it — he was the grandson of a labourer, and thanked God for it — he had made his fortune by his own honest labour, and why should he be ashamed of it?

And now, having explained at full length who the several heroes and heroines of this history were, and how they conducted themselves in the country, let us describe their behaviour in London, and the great events which occurred there.

You must know that Mr. Perkins bore away the tenderest recollections of the young lady with whom he had danced at the Oldborough ball, and, having taken particular care to find out where she dwelt when in the metropolis, managed soon to become acquainted with aunt Biggs, and made himself so amiable to that lady, that she begged he would pass all his disengaged evenings at her lodgings in Caroline-place. Mrs. Biggs was perfectly aware that the young gentleman did not come for her bohea and muffins, so much as for the sweeter conversation of her niece, Miss Gorgon; but seeing that these two young people were of an age when ideas of love and marriage will spring up, do what you will; seeing that her niece had a fortune, and Mr. Perkins had the prospect of a place, and was moreover a very amiable and well-disposed young fellow, she thought her niece could not do better than marry him; and Miss Gorgon thought so too. Now the public will be able to understand the meaning of that important conversation which is recorded at the very commencement of this history.

Lady Gorgon and her family were likewise in town; but when in the metropolis, they never took notice of their relative, Miss Lucy; the idea of acknowledging an ex-schoolmistress, living in Mecklenburgh-square, being much too preposterous for a person of my Lady Gorgon's breeding and fashion. She did not, therefore, know of the progress which sly Perkins was making all this while; for Lucy Gorgon did not think it was at all necessary to inform her ladyship how deeply she was smitten by the wicked young gentleman, who had made all the disturbance at the Oldborough ball.

The intimacy of these young persons had, in fact, become so close, that on a certain sunshiny Sunday in December, after having accompanied aunt Biggs to church, they had pursued their walk as far as that rendezvous of lovers — the Regent's Park, and were talking of their coming marriage with much confidential tenderness, before the bears in the Zoological Gardens.

Miss Lucy was ever and anon feeding those interesting animals with buns, to perform which act of charity, she had clambered up on the parapet which surrounds their den. Mr. Perkins was below; and Miss Lucy, having distributed her buns, was on the point of following, — but whether from timidity, or whether from a desire to do young Perkins an essential service, I know not; however, she found herself quite unwilling to jump down unaided.

"My dearest John," said she, "I never can jump that."

Whereupon, John stepped up, put one hand round Lucy's waist; and as one of hers gently fell upon his shoulder, Mr. Perkins took the other, and said, —

"Now jump."

Hoop! jump she did, and so excessively active and clever was Mr. John Perkins, that he jumped Miss Lucy plump into the middle of a group formed of

Lady Gorgon,

The Misses Gorgon,

Master George Augustus Frederic Grimbsy Gorgon,

And a footman, poodle, and French governess, who had all been for two or three minutes listening to the billings and cooings of these imprudent young lovers.

Chapter II

SHOWS HOW THE PLOT BEGAN TO THICKEN IN OR ABOUT BEDFORD-ROW

"Miss Lucy!"

"Upon my word!"

"I'm hanged if it arn't Lucy! How do, Lucy?" uttered Lady, the Misses, and Master Gorgon in a breath.

Lucy came forward, bending down her ambrosial curls, and blushing, as a modest young woman should; for, in truth, the scrape was very awkward, and as for John Perkins, he made a start, and then a step forwards, and then two backwards, and then began laying hands upon his black satin stock — in short, the sun did not shine at that moment upon a man who looked so exquisitely foolish.

"Miss Lucy Gorgon, is your aunt — is Mrs. Briggs here?" said Gorgon, drawing herself up with much state.

"Mrs. Biggs, aunt," said Lucy demurely.

"Biggs or Briggs, madam, it is not of the slightest consequence. I presume that persons in my rank of life are not expected to know every body's name in Magdeburg-square?" (Lady Gorgon had a house in Baker-street, and a dismal house it was.) "*Not* here," continued she, rightly interpreting Lucy's silence, "not here? — and may I ask how long is it

that young ladies have been allowed to walk abroad without chaperons, and to — to take a part in such scenes as that which we have just seen acted?"

To this question — and indeed it was rather difficult to answer — Miss Gorgon had no reply. There were the six grey eyes of her cousins glowering at her — there was George Augustus Frederic examining her with an air of extreme wonder, Mademoiselle the governess turning her looks demurely away, and awful Lady Gorgon glancing fiercely at her in front. Not mentioning the footman and poodle, what could a poor, modest, timid girl plead before such an inquisition, especially when she was clearly guilty? Add to this, that as Lady Gorgon, that majestic woman, always remarkable for her size and insolence of demeanour, had planted herself in the middle of the path, and spoke at the extreme pitch of her voice, many persons walking in the neighbourhood had heard her ladyship's speech and stopped, and seemed disposed to await the rejoinder.

"For Heaven's sake, aunt, don't draw a crowd around us," said Lucy, who, indeed, was glad of the only escape that lay in her power. "I will tell you of the — of the circumstances of — of my engagement with this gentleman — with Mr. Perkins," added she, in a softer tone — so soft that the *'erkins* was quite inaudible.

"A Mr. What? An engagement without consulting your guardians!" screamed her ladyship, "this must be looked to! Jerningham, call round my carriage. Mademoiselle, you will have the goodness to walk home with Master Gorgon, and carry him if you please, where there is wet; and, girls, as the day is fine, you will do likewise. Jerningham, you will attend the young ladies. Miss Gorgon, I will thank you to follow me immediately;" and so saying, and looking at the crowd with ineffable scorn, and at Mr. Perkins not at all, the lady bustled away forwards, the files of Gorgon daughters and governess closing round and enveloping poor Lucy, who found herself carried forward against her will, and in a minute seated in her aunt's coach, along with that tremendous person.

Her case was bad enough, but what was it to Perkins's? Fancy his blank surprise and rage at having his love thus suddenly ravished from him, and his delicious *tête-à-tête* interrupted. He managed, in an inconceivably short space of time, to conjure up half a million obstacles to his union. What should he do? he would rush on to Baker-street, and wait there until his Lucy left Lady Gorgon's house.

He could find no vehicle for him in the Regent's Park, and was in consequence obliged to make his journey on foot. Of course, he nearly killed himself with running, and ran so quick, that he was just in time to see two ladies step out of Lady Gorgon's carriage at her own house, and to hear Jerningham's fellow-footman roar to the Gorgonian coachman, "Half-past seven!" at which hour we are, to this day, convinced that Lady Gorgon was going out to dine. Mr. Jerningham's associate

having banged to the door, with an insolent look towards Perkins, who was prying in with the most suspicious and indecent curiosity, retired, exclaiming, "That chap has a hi to our great-coats, I reckon!" and left John Perkins to pace the street and be miserable.

John Perkins then walked resolutely up and down dismal Baker-street, determined on an *éclaircissement*. He was for some time occupied in thinking how it was that the Gorgons were not at church, they who made such a parade of piety; and John Perkins smiled as he passed the chapel, and saw that two *charity sermons* were to be preached that day — and therefore it was that General Gorgon read prayers to his family at home in the morning.

Perkins, at last, saw that little general, in blue frock-coat and spotless buff gloves, saunter scowling home; and half an hour before his arrival, had witnessed the entrance of Jerningham, and the three gaunt Miss Gorgons, poodle, son-and-heir, and French governess, protected by him, into Sir George's mansion.

"Can she be going to stay all night?" mused poor John, after being on the watch for three hours, "that footman is the only person who has left the house," when presently, to his inexpressible delight, he saw a very dirty hackney-coach clatter up to the Gorgon door, out of which first issued the ruby plush breeches and stalwart calves of Mr. Jerningham; these were followed by his body, and then the gentleman, ringing modestly, was admitted.

Again the door opened — a lady came out, nor was she followed by the footman, who crossed his legs at the door-post, and allowed her to mount the jingling vehicle as best she might. Mr. Jerningham had witnessed the scene in the Park-gardens, had listened to the altercation through the library keyhole, and had been mighty sulky at being ordered to call a coach for this young woman. He did not therefore deign to assist her to mount.

But there was *one* who did! Perkins was by the side of his Lucy: he had seen her start back, and cry, "La, John!" — had felt her squeeze his arm — had mounted with her into the coach, and then shouted with a voice of thunder to the coachman, "Caroline-place, Mecklenburgh-square."

But Mr. Jerningham would have been much more surprised and puzzled if he had waited one minute longer, and seen this Mr. Perkins, who had so gallantly escaladed the hackney-coach, step out of it with the most mortified, miserable, chapfallen countenance possible.

The fact is, he had found poor Lucy sobbing fit to break her heart, and instead of consoling her as he expected, he only seemed to irritate her further: for she said, "Mr. Perkins — I beg — I insist, that you leave the carriage;" and when Perkins made some movement, (which, not being in the vehicle at the time, we have never been able to comprehend,) she suddenly sprung from the back-seat, and began pulling at a large piece of

cord, which communicated with the wrist of the gentleman driving; and screaming to him at the top of her voice, bade him immediately stop.

This Mr. Coachman did, with a curious, puzzled, grinning air.

Perkins descended, and on being asked, "Vere ham I to drive the young 'oman, sir?" I am sorry to say muttered something like an oath, and uttered the above-mentioned words, "Caroline-place, Mecklenburgh-square," in a tone which I should be inclined to describe as both dogged and sheepish, — very different from that cheery voice, which he had used when he first gave the order.

Poor Lucy, in the course of those fatal three hours which had passed while Mr. Perkins was pacing up and down Baker-street, had received a lecture which lasted exactly one hundred and eighty minutes — from her aunt first, then from her uncle, whom we have seen marching homewards, and often from both together.

Sir George Gorgon and his lady poured out such a flood of advice and abuse against the poor girl, that she came away from the interview quite timid and cowering; and when she saw John Perkins (the sly rogue! how well he thought he had managed the trick!) she shrunk from him as if he had been a demon of wickedness, ordered him out of the carriage, and went home by herself, convinced that she had committed some tremendous sin.

While, then, her coach jingled away to Caroline-place, Perkins, once more alone, bent his steps in the same direction — a desperate heart-stricken man — he passed by the beloved's door — saw lights in the front drawing-room — felt probably that she was there — but he could not go in. Moodily he paced down Doughty-street, and turning abruptly into Bedford-row, rushed into his own chambers, where Mrs. Snooks, the laundress, had prepared his humble sabbath meal.

A cheerful fire blazed in his garret, and Mrs. Snooks had prepared for him the favourite blade-bone he loved (blest four days' dinner for a bachelor, roast, cold, hashed, grilled blade-bone, the fourth being better than the first); but although he usually did rejoice in this meal, ordinarily, indeed, grumbling that there was not enough to satisfy him — he, on this occasion, after two mouthfuls, flung down his knife and fork, and buried his two claws in his hair.

"Snooks," said he at last, very moodily, "remove this d— mutton, give me my writing things, and some hot brandy-and-water."

This was done without much alarm, for you must know that Perkins used to dabble in poetry, and ordinarily prepared himself for composition by this kind of stimulus.

He wrote hastily a few lines.

"Snooks, put on your bonnet," said he, "and carry this — *you know where?*" he added, in such a hollow, heart-breaking tone of voice, that affected poor Snooks almost to tears. She went, however, with the note, which was to this purpose: —

"Lucy! Lucy! my soul's love — what, what has happened? I am writing this (*a gulp of brandy-and-water*) in a state bordering on distraction — madness — insanity (*another*). Why did you send me out of the coach in that cruel, cruel way? Write to me a word, a line — tell me, tell me, I may come to you — and leave me not in this agonizing condition; your faithful (*glog — glog — glog, — the whole glass*). "J. P."

He never signed John Perkins in full — he couldn't, it was so unromantic.

Well, this missive was despatched by Mrs. Snooks, and Perkins, in a fearful state of excitement, haggard, wild, and with more brandy-and-water, awaited the return of his messenger.

When at length, after about an absence of forty years, as it seemed to him, the old lady returned with a large packet, Perkins seized it with a trembling hand, and was yet more frightened to see the handwriting of Mrs. or Miss Biggs.

"My dear Mr. Perkins," she began, "although I am not your soul's adored, I performed her part for once, since I have read your letter, as I told her; — you need not be very much alarmed, although Lucy is at this moment in bed and unwell, for the poor girl has had a sad scene at her grand uncle's house in Baker-street, and came home very much affected. Rest, however, will restore her, for she is not one of your nervous sort, and I hope when you come in the morning, you will see her as blooming as she was when you went out to-day on that unlucky walk.

"See what Sir George Gorgon says of us all! You won't challenge him I know, as he is to be your uncle, and so I may show you his letter.

"Good night, my dear John; do not go *quite* distracted before morning; and believe me your loving aunt, "Barbara Biggs."

"*Baker-street,* 11 *December.*

"Major-General Sir George Gorgon has heard with the utmost disgust and surprise of the engagement which Miss Lucy Gorgon has thought fit to form.

"The major-general cannot conceal his indignation at the share which Miss Biggs has taken in this disgraceful transaction.

"Sir George Gorgon puts an absolute veto upon all further communication between his niece and the lowborn adventurer who has been admitted into her society, and begs to say that Lieutenant Fitch, of the Life-guards, is the gentleman who he intends shall marry Miss Gorgon.

"It is the major-general's wish, that on the 28th Miss Gorgon should be ready to come to his house, in Baker-street, where she will be more safe from impertinent intrusions than she has been in Mucklebury-square.

"Mrs. Biggs,
"Caroline-place,
"Mecklenburgh-square."

When poor John Perkins read this epistle, blank rage and wonder filled his soul, at the audacity of the little general, who thus, without the smallest title in the world, pretended to dispose of the hand and fortune of his niece. The fact is, that Sir George had such a transcendent notion of his own dignity and station, that it never for a moment entered his head that his niece, or anybody else connected with him, should take a single step in life without previously receiving his orders, and Mr. Fitch, a baronet's son, having expressed admiration of Lucy, Sir George had determined that his suit should be accepted, and really considered Lucy's preference of another as downright treason.

John Perkins determined on the death of Fitch as the very least reparation that should satisfy him; and vowed too that some of the general's blood should be shed for the words which he had dared to utter.

We have said that William Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P., occupied the first floor of Mr. Perkins's house, in Bedford-row; and the reader is further to be informed that an immense friendship had sprung up between these two gentlemen. The fact is, that poor John was very much flattered by Scully's notice, and began in a very short time to fancy himself a political personage; for he had made several of Scully's speeches, written more than one letter from him to his constituents, and, in a word, acted as his gratis clerk. At least a guinea a week did Mr. Perkins save to the pockets of Mr. Scully, and with hearty good will too, for he adored the great William Pitt, and believed every word that dropped from the pompous lips of that gentleman.

Well, after having discussed Sir George Gorgon's letter, poor Perkins, in the utmost fury of mind that his darling should be slandered so, feeling a desire for fresh air, determined to descend to the garden, and smoke a cigar in that rural, quiet spot. The night was very calm. The moonbeams slept softly upon the herbage of Gray's Inn-gardens, and bathed with silver splendour Tibbald's-row. A million of little frisky twinkling stars attended their queen, who looked with bland round face upon their gambols, as they peeped in and out from the azure heavens. Along Gray's-inn wall a lazy row of cabs stood listlessly, for who would call a cab on such a night? Meanwhile their drivers, at the alehouse near, smoked the short pipe or quaffed the foaming beer. Perhaps from Gray's-inn-lane some broken sounds of Irish revelry might rise. Issuing perhaps from Raymond-buildings gate, six lawyers' clerks might whoop a tipsy song — or the loud watchman yell the passing hour — but beyond this all was silence, and young Perkins, as he sat in the summer-house at the bottom of the garden, and contemplated the peaceful heaven, felt some influences of it entering into his soul, and almost forgetting revenge, thought but of peace and love.

Presently, he was aware there was some one else pacing the garden. Who could it be? — Not Blatherwick, for he passed the Sabbath with his

grandmamma at Clapham — not Scully surely, for he always went to Bethesda chapel, and to a select prayer-meeting afterwards. Alas! it *was* Scully — for though that gentleman *said* that he went to chapel, we have it for a fact that he did not always keep his promise, and was at this moment employed in rehearsing an extempore speech which he proposed to deliver at St. Stephen's.

"Had I, sir," spouted he, with folded arms, slowly pacing to and fro, "had, I, sir, entertained the smallest possible intention of addressing the House on the present occasion — hum, on the present occasion — I would have endeavoured to prepare myself in a way that should have at least shown my sense of the greatness of the subject before the House's consideration, and the nature of the distinguished audience I have the honour to address. I am, sir, a plain man — born of the people — myself one of the people, having won, thank Heaven, an honourable fortune and position by my own honest labour; and standing here as I do —"

. . . . . .

Here Mr. Scully (it may be said that he never made a speech without bragging about himself, and an excellent plan it is, for people cannot help believing you at last) — here, I say, Mr. Scully, who had one arm raised, felt himself suddenly tipped on the shoulder, and heard a voice saying, "Your money or your life!"

The honourable gentleman twirled round as if he had been shot — the papers on which a great part of this impromptu were written dropped from his lifted hand, and some of them were actually borne on the air into neighbouring gardens. The man was, in fact, in the direst fright.

"It's only I," said Perkins, with rather a forced laugh, when he saw the effect that his wit had produced.

"Only you! And pray what the dev — what right have you to — to come upon a man of my rank in that way, and disturb me in the midst of very important meditations?" asked Mr. Scully, beginning to grow fierce.

"I want your advice," said Perkins, "on a matter of the very greatest importance to me. You know my idea of marrying?"

"Marry!" said Scully; "I thought you had given up that silly scheme. And how, pray, do you intend to live?"

"Why, my intended has a couple of hundreds a year, and my clerkship in the Tape-and-Sealing-Wax Office will be as much more."

"Clerkship — Tape-and-Sealing-Wax Office — government sinecure! — Why, good Heavens! John Perkins, you don't tell *me* that you are going to accept any such thing?"

"It *is* a very small salary, certainly," said John, who had a decent notion of his own merits; "but consider, six month's vacation, two hours in the day, and those spent over the newspapers. After all, it's —"

"After all, it's a swindle," roared out Mr. Scully, "a swindle upon the

country; an infamous tax upon the people, who starve that you may fatten in idleness. But take this clerkship in the Tape-and-Sealing-Wax Office," continued the patriot, his bosom heaving with noble indignation, and his eye flashing the purest fire,—"*Take* this clerkship, John Perkins, and sanction tyranny, by becoming one of its agents; sanction dishonesty by sharing in its plunder — do this, BUT never more be friend of mine. Had I a child," said the patriot, clasping his hands and raising his eyes to heaven, "I would rather see him — dead, sir — dead, dead at my feet, than the servant of a government which all honest men despise;" and here giving a searching glance at Perkins, Mr. Scully began tramping up and down the garden in a perfect fury.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed the timid John Perkins — "don't say *so*. My dear Mr. Scully, I'm not the dishonest character you suppose me to be — I never looked at the matter in this light. I'll — I'll consider of it. I'll tell Crampton that I will give up the place; but for Heaven's sake, don't let me forfeit *your* friendship, which is dearer to me than any place in the world."

Mr. Scully pressed his hand, and said nothing; and though their interview lasted a full half hour longer, during which they paced up and down the gravel-walk, we shall not breathe a single syllable of their conversation, as it has nothing to do with our tale.

The next morning, after an interview with Miss Lucy, John Perkins, Esq., was seen to issue from Mrs. Biggs's house, looking particularly pale, melancholy, and thoughtful; and he did not stop until he reached a certain door in Downing-street, where was the office of a certain great minister, and the offices of the clerks in his lordship's department.

The head of them was Mr. Josiah Crampton, who has now to be introduced to the public. He was a little old gentleman, some sixty years of age, maternal-uncle to John Perkins; a bachelor, who had been about forty-two years employed in the department of which he was now the head.

After waiting four hours in an anteroom, where a number of Irishmen, some newspaper-editors, many pompous-looking political personages, asking for the "first-lord;" a few sauntering clerks, and numbers of swift active messengers passed to and fro. After waiting for four hours, making drawings on the blotting-book, and reading the *Morning Post* for that day week, Mr. Perkins was informed that he might go into his uncle's room, and did so accordingly.

He found a little hard old gentleman seated at a table covered with every variety of sealing-wax, blotting-paper, envelopes, despatch-boxes, green-tapers, &c. &c. An immense fire was blazing in the grate, an immense sheet-almanac hung over that, a screen, three or four chairs, and a faded Turkey carpet, formed the rest of the furniture of this remarkable room,

which I have described thus particularly, because, in the course of a long official life, I have remarked that such is the invariable decoration of political rooms.

"Well, John," said the little hard old gentleman, pointing to an arm-chair, "I'm told you've been here since eleven. Why the deuce do you come so early?"

"I had important business," answered Mr. Perkins, stoutly; and as his uncle looked up with a comical expression of wonder, John began in a solemn tone to deliver a little speech which he had composed, and which proved him to be a very worthy, easy, silly fellow.

"Sir," said Mr. Perkins, "you have known for some time past the nature of my political opinions, and the intimacy which I have had the honour to form with one — with some, of the leading members of the liberal party. (A grin from Mr. Crampton.) When first, by your kindness, I was promised the clerkship in the Tape-and-Sealing-Wax Office, my opinions were not formed as they are now; and having taken the advice of the gentlemen with whom I act, — (an enormous grin,) — the advice, I say, of the gentlemen with whom I act, and the counsel likewise of my own conscience, I am compelled, with the deepest grief, to say, my dear uncle, that I — I —"

"That you — what, sir?" exclaimed little Mr. Crampton, bouncing off his chair. "You don't mean to say that you are such a fool as to decline the place?"

"I do decline the place," said Perkins, whose blood rose at the word "fool;" "as a man of honour, I cannot take it."

"Not take it! and how are you to live? On the rent of that house of yours? For by gad, sir, if you give up the clerkship, I never will give you a shilling."

"It cannot be helped," said Mr. Perkins, looking as much like a martyr as he possibly could, and thinking himself a very fine fellow. "I have talents, sir, which I hope to cultivate; and am member of a profession by which a man may hope to rise to the very highest offices of the state."

"Profession, talents, offices of the state! Are you mad, John Perkins, that you come to me with such insufferable twaddle as this?" Why, do you think if you *had* been capable of rising at the bar, I would have taken so much trouble about getting you a place? No, sir; you are too fond of pleasure, and bed, and tea-parties, and small-talk, and reading novels, and playing the flute, and writing sonnets. You would no more rise at the bar than my messenger, sir; it was because I knew your disposition — that hopeless, careless, irresolute, good humour of yours, that I had determined to keep you out of danger, by placing you in a snug shelter, where the storms of the world would not come near you. You must have principles, forsooth! and you must marry Miss Gorgon, of course; and by the time you have gone ten circuits, and had six children, you will have

eaten up every shilling of your wife's fortune, and be as briefless as you are now. Who the deuce has put all this nonsense into your head? I think I know."

Mr. Perkins's ears tingled as these hard words saluted them; and he scarcely knew whether he ought to knock his uncle down or fall at his feet, and say, "Uncle, I have been a fool, and I know it." The fact is, that in his interview with Miss Gorgon and her aunt in the morning, when he came to tell them of the resolution he had formed to give up the place, both the ladies and John himself had agreed, with a thousand rapturous tears and exclamations, that he was one of the noblest young men that ever lived, had acted as became himself, and might with perfect propriety give up the place, his talents being so prodigious that no power on earth could hinder him from being lord chancellor. Indeed, John and Lucy had always thought the clerkship quite beneath him, and were not a little glad, perhaps, at finding a pretext for decently refusing it. But as Perkins was a young gentleman whose candour was such that he was always swayed by the opinions of the last speaker, he did begin to feel now the truth of his uncle's statements, however disagreeable they might be.

Mr. Crampton continued: —

"I think I know the cause of your patriotism. Has not William Pitt Scully, Esq., had something to do with it?"

Mr. Perkins *could* not turn any redder than he was, but confessed with deep humiliation that "he *had* consulted Mr. Scully, among other friends."

Mr. Crampton smiled — drew a letter from a heap before him, and, tearing off the signature, handed over the document to his nephew. It contained the following paragraphs: —

"Hawksby has sounded Scully: we can have him any day we want him. He talks very big at present, and says he would not take anything under a . . . . This is absurd. He has a Yorkshire nephew coming up to town, and wants a place for him. There is one vacant in the Tape Office, he says: have you not a promise of it?"

"I can't — I can't believe it," said John; "this, sir, is some weak invention of the enemy. Scully is the most honourable man breathing."

"Mr. Scully is a gentleman in a very fair way to make a fortune," answered Mr. Crampton. "Look you, John — it is just as well for your sake that I should give you the news a few weeks before the papers, for I don't want you to be ruined if I can help it, as I don't wish to have you on my hands. We know all the particulars of Scully's history. He was a Tory attorney at Oldborough; he was jilted by the present Lady Gorgon! turned Radical, and fought Sir George in his own borough. Sir George would have had the peerage he is dying for, had he not lost that second seat (by-the-by, my lady will be here in five minutes), and Scully is now quite firm there. Well, my dear lad, we have bought your incorruptible Scully. Look here," — and Mr. Crampton produced three *Morning Posts*.

"'The Honourable Henry Hawksby's Dinner Party — Lord So-and-so — Duke of So-and-So — W. Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P.'

"Hawksby is our neutral, our dinner-giver.

"'Lady Diana Doldrum's Rout. — W. Pitt Scully, Esq., again.'

"'The Earl of Mantrap's Grand Dinner. — A duke — four lords — Mr. Scully, and *Sir George Gorgon.*'"

"Well, but I don't see how you have bought him; look at his votes."

"My dear John," said Mr. Crampton, jingling his watch-seals very complacently, "I am letting you into fearful secrets. The great common end of party is to buy your opponents — the great statesman buys them for nothing."

Here the attendant genius of Mr. Crampton made his appearance, and whispered something, to which the little gentleman said, "Show her ladyship in," — when the attendant disappeared.

"John," said Mr. Crampton, with a very queer smile, "you can't stay in this room while Lady Gorgon is with me; but there is a little clerk's room behind the screen there, where you can wait until I call you."

John retired, and as he closed the door of communication, strange to say, little Mr. Crampton sprung up and said, "Confound the young ninny, he has shut the door!"

Mr. Crampton then, remembering that he wanted a map in the next room, sprang into it, left the door half open in coming out, and was in time to receive her ladyship with smiling face as she, ushered by Mr. Strongitharm, majestically sailed in.

Chapter III

In issuing from, and leaving open, the door of the inner room, Mr. Crampton had bestowed upon Mr. Perkins a look so peculiarly arch, that even he, simple as he was, began to imagine that some mystery was about to be cleared up, or some mighty matter to be discussed. Presently he heard the well-known voice of Lady Gorgon in conversation with his uncle. What could their talk be about? Mr. Perkins was dying to know, and, shall we say it? advanced to the door on tiptoe and listened with all his might.

Her ladyship, that Juno of a woman, if she had not borrowed Venus's girdle to render herself irresistible, at least had adopted a tender, coaxing, wheedling, frisky tone, quite different from her ordinary dignified style of conversation. She called Mr. Crampton a naughty man, for neglecting his old friends, vowed that Sir George was quite hurt at his not coming to dine — nor fixing a day when he would come — and added with a most engaging ogle, that she had three fine girls at home, who would perhaps make an evening pass pleasantly, even to such a gay bachelor as Mr. Crampton.

"Madam," said he, with much gravity, "the daughters of such a mother must be charming, but I, who have seen your ladyship, am, alas! proof against even them."

Both parties here heaved tremendous sighs, and affected to be wonderfully unhappy about something.

"I wish," after a pause, said Lady Gorgon — "I wish, dear Mr. Crampton, you would not use that odious title 'my ladyship,' you know it always makes me melancholy."

"Melancholy, my dear Lady Gorgon, and why?"

"Because it makes me think of another title that ought to have been mine — ours (I speak for dear Sir George's and my darling boy's sake, heaven knows, not mine). What a sad disappointment it has been to my husband, that after all his services, all the promises he has had, they have never given him his peerage. As for me, you know —"

"For you, my dear madam, I know quite well that you care for no such bauble as a coronet, except in so far as it may confer honour upon those most dear to you — excellent wife and noble mother as you are. Heigho! what a happy man is Sir George!"

Here there was another pause, and if Mr. Perkins could have seen what was taking place behind the screen, he would have beheld little Mr. Crampton looking into Lady Gorgon's face, with as love-sick a Romeo-gaze as he could possibly counterfeit, while her ladyship, blushing somewhat and turning her own grey gogglers up to heaven, received all his words for gospel, and sat fancying herself to be the best, most meritorious, and most beautiful creature in the three kingdoms.

"You men are terrible flatterers," continued she, "but you say right, for myself I value not these empty distinctions. I am growing old, Mr. Crampton, — yes, indeed, I am, although you smile so incredulously, — and let me add, that *my* thoughts are fixed upon *higher* things than earthly crowns. But tell me, you who are all-in-all with Lord Bagwig, are we never to have our peerage? His majesty, I know, is not averse; the services of dear Sir George to a member of his majesty's august family, I know, have been appreciated in the highest quarter. Ever since the peace we have had a promise. Four hundred pounds has Sir George spent at the herald's office, (I, myself, am of one of the most ancient families in the kingdom, Mr. Crampton,) and the poor dear man's health is really ruined by the anxious, sickening feeling of hope so long delayed."

Mr. Crampton now assumed an air of much solemnity.

"My dear Lady Gorgon," said he, "will you let me be frank with you, and will you promise solemnly that what I am going to tell you shall never be repeated to a single soul?"

Lady Gorgon promised.

"Well, then, since the truth you must know, you yourselves have been in part the cause of the delay of which you complain. You gave us two

votes five years ago, you now only give us one. If Sir George were to go up to the Peers, we should lose even that one vote; and would it be common sense in us to incur such a loss? Mr. Scully, the Liberal, would return another member of his own way of thinking; and as for the Lords, we have, you know, a majority there."

"Oh, that horrid man!" said Lady Gorgon, cursing Mr. Scully in her heart, and beginning to play a rapid tattoo with her feet, "that miscreant, that traitor, that — that attorney has been our ruin."

"Horrid man if you please, but give me leave to tell you that the horrid man is not the sole cause of your ruin — if ruin you will call it. I am sorry to say that I do candidly think ministers think that Sir George Gorgon has lost his influence in Oldborough as much through his own fault, as through Mr. Scully's cleverness."

"Our own fault! Good heavens! Have we not done everything — everything that persons of our station in the county could do, to keep those misguided men? Have we not remonstrated, threatened, taken away our custom from the mayor, established a Conservative apothecary — in fact done all that gentlemen could do? But these are such times, Mr. Crampton, the spirit of revolution is abroad, and the great families of England are menaced by democratic insolence."

This was Sir George Gorgon's speech always after dinner, and was delivered by his lady with a great deal of stateliness. Somewhat, perhaps, to her annoyance, Mr. Crampton only smiled, shook his head, and said —

"Nonsense, my dear Lady Gorgon — pardon the phrase, but I am a plain old man, and call things by their names. Now, will you let me whisper in your ear one word of truth? You have tried all sorts of remonstrances, and exerted yourself to maintain your influence in every way, except the right one, and that is! —"

"What, in Heaven's name?"

"Conciliation. We know your situation in the borough. Mr. Scully's whole history, and, pardon me for saying so, (but we men in office know everything,) yours —"

Lady Gorgon's ears and cheeks now assumed the hottest hue of crimson. She thought of her former passages with Scully, and of the days when — but never mind when, for she suffered her veil to fall, and buried her head in the folds of her handkerchief. Vain folds! The wily little Mr. Crampton could see all that passed behind the cambric, and continued —

"Yes, madam, we know the absurd hopes that were formed by a certain attorney twenty years since. We know how, up to this moment, he boasts of certain walks —"

"With the governess — we were always with the governess!" shrieked out Lady Gorgon, clasping her hands. She was not the wisest of women."

"With the governess, of course," said Mr. Crampton, firmly. "Do you suppose that any man dare breathe a syllable against your spotless repu-

tation? Never, my dear madam; but what I would urge is this — you have treated your disappointed admirer too cruelly."

"What, the traitor who has robbed us of our rights?"

"He never would have robbed you of your rights if you had been more kind to him. You should be gentle, madam; you should forgive him — you should be friends with him."

"With a traitor, never!"

"Think what made him a traitor, Lady Gorgon; look in your glass, and say if there be not some excuse for him. Think of the feelings of the man who saw beauty such as yours — I am a plain man and must speak — Virtue such as yours, in the possession of a rival. By heavens, madam, I think he was *right* to hate Sir George Gorgon! Would you have him allow such a prize to be ravished from him without a pang on his part?"

"He was, I believe, very much attached to me," said Lady Gorgon quite delighted; "but you must be aware that a young man of his station in life, could not look up to a person of my rank."

"Surely not; it was monstrous pride and arrogance in Mr. Scully; but *que voulez vous?* Such is the world's way — Scully could not help loving you — who that knows you can? I am a plain man, and say what I think. He loves you still. Why make an enemy of him, who would at a word be at your feet? Dearest Lady Gorgon, listen to me. Sir George Gorgon and Mr. Scully have already met — their meeting was our contrivance, it is for our interest, for yours, that they should be friends; if there were two ministerial members for Oldborough, do you think your husband's peerage would be less secure? I am not at liberty to tell you all I know on this subject; but do, I entreat you, do be reconciled to him."

And after a little more conversation which was carried on by Mr. Crampton in the same tender way, this important interview closed, and Lady Gorgon, folding her shawl round her, threaded certain mysterious passages, and found her way to her carriage in Whitehall.

"I hope you have not been listening, you rogue," said Mr. Crampton to his nephew, who blushed most absurdly by way of answer. "You would have heard great state secrets, if you had dared to do so. That woman is perpetually here, and if peerages are to be had for the asking, she ought to have been a duchess by this time. I would not have admitted her but for a reason that I have. Go you now and ponder upon what you have heard and seen. Be on good terms with Scully, and above all, speak not a word concerning our interview — no, not a word even to your mistress. By the way, I presume, sir, you will recall your resignation?"

The bewildered Perkins was about to stammer out a speech, when his uncle, cutting it short, pushed him gently out of the door.

. . . . .

At the period when the important events occurred which have been recorded here, parties ran very high, and a mighty struggle for the vacant

speakership was about to come on. The Right Honourable Robert Pincher was the ministerial candidate, and Sir Charles Macabaw was patronised by the opposition. The two members for Oldborough of course took different sides, the baronet being of the Pincher faction, while Mr. William Pitt Scully strongly supported the Macabaw party.

It was Mr. Scully's intention to deliver an impromptu speech upon the occasion of the election, and he and his faithful Perkins prepared it between them; for the latter gentleman had wisely kept his uncle's counsel and his own, and Mr. Scully was quite ignorant of the conspiracy that was brooding. Indeed, so artfully had that young Machiavel of a Perkins conducted himself, that when asked by his patron whether he had given up his place in the Tape-and-Sealing-Wax Office, he replied that, "he *had* tendered his resignation," but did not say one word about having recalled it.

"You were right, my boy, quite right," said Mr. Scully; "a man of uncompromising principles should make no compromise;" and herewith he sat down and wrote off a couple of letters, one to Mr. Ringwood, telling him that the place in the Sealing-Wax Office was, as he had reason to know, vacant; and the other to his nephew, stating that it was to be his. "Under the rose, my dear Bob," added Mr. Scully, "it will cost you five hundred pounds, but you cannot invest your money better."

It is needless to state that the affair was to be conducted "with the strictest secrecy and honour," and that the money was to pass through Mr. Scully's hands.

While, however, the great Pincher and Macabaw question was yet undecided, an event occurred to Mr. Scully which had a great influence upon his after-life. A second grand banquet was given at the Earl of Mantrap's; Lady Mantrap requested him to conduct Lady Gorgon to dinner, and the latter, with a charming timidity, and a gracious melancholy look into his face, (after which her veined eyelids veiled her azure eyes,) put her hand into the trembling one of Mr. Scully, and said, as much as looks could say, "Forgive and forget."

Down went Scully to dinner; there were dukes on his right hand, and earls on his left; there were but two persons without title in the midst of that glittering assemblage; the very servants looked like noblemen, the cook had done wonders, the wines were cool and rich, and Lady Gorgon was splendid! What attention did everybody pay to her and to him! Why *would* she go on gazing into his face with that tender, imploring look? In other words, Scully, after partaking of soup and fish, (he, during their discussion, had been thinking over all the former love-and-hate passages between himself and Lady Gorgon,) turned very red, and began talking to her.

"Were you not at the opera on Tuesday?" began he, assuming at once the airs of a man of fashion. "I thought I caught a glimpse of you in the Duchess of Diddlebury's box."

"Opera, Mr. Scully!" (pronouncing the word "Scully" with the utmost softness.) "Ah, no! we seldom go, and yet too often. For serious persons the enchantments of that place are too dangerous — I am so nervous — so delicate; the smallest trifle so agitates, depresses, or irritates me, that I dare not yield myself up to the excitement of music. I am too passionately attached to it; and shall I tell you, it has such a strange influence upon me, that the smallest false note almost drives me to distraction, and for that very reason I hardly ever go to a concert or a ball."

"Egad," thought Scully, "I recollect when she would dance down a matter of five-and-forty couple, and jingle away at the Battle of Prague all day."

She continued, "Don't you recollect, I do — with, oh, what regret! — that day at Oldborough race-ball, when I behaved with such sad rudeness to you; you will scarcely believe me, and yet I assure you 'tis the fact, the music had made me almost mad; do let me ask your pardon for my conduct, I was not myself. Oh, Mr. Scully! I am no worldly woman; I know my duties, and I feel my wrongs. Nights and nights have I lain awake weeping and thinking of that unhappy day. That I should ever speak so to an old friend, for we *were* old friends, were we not?"

Scully did not speak; but his eyes were bursting out of his head, and his face was the exact colour of a deputy-lieutenant's uniform.

"That I should ever forget myself and you so! How I have been longing for this opportunity to ask you to forgive me! I asked Lady Mantrap, when I heard you were to be here, to invite me to her party. Come, I know you will forgive me — your eyes say you will. You used to look so in old days, and forgive me my caprices *then*. Do give me a little wine — we will drink to the memory of old days."

Her eyes filled with tears, and poor Scully's hand caused such a rattling and trembling of the glass and the decanter, that the Duke of Doldrum, who had been, during the course of this whispered sentimentality, describing a famous run with the queen's hounds at the top of his voice, stopped at the jingling of the glass, and his tale was lost for ever. Scully hastily drank his wine, and Lady Gorgon turned round to her next neighbour, a little gentleman in black, between whom and herself certain conscious looks passed.

"I am glad poor Sir George is not here," said he, smiling.

Lady Gorgon said, "Pooh, for shame!" The little gentleman was no other than Josiah Crampton, Esq., that eminent financier, and he was now going through the curious calculation which we mentioned in our last, and by which you *buy a man for nothing*. He intended to pay the very same price for Sir George Gorgon too, but there was no need to tell the baronet so; only of this the reader must be made aware.

While Mr. Crampton was conducting this intrigue, which was to bring a new recruit to the ministerial ranks, his mighty spirit condescended to

ponder upon subjects of infinitely less importance, and to arrange plans for the welfare of his nephew and the young woman to whom he had made a present of his heart. These young persons, as we said before, had arranged to live in Mr. Perkins's own house in Bedford-row. It was of a peculiar construction, and might more properly be called a house and a half; for a snug little tenement of four chambers protruded from the back of the house into the garden. These rooms communicated with the drawing-rooms occupied by Mr. Scully; and Perkins, who acted as his friend and secretary, used frequently to sit in the one nearest the member's study, in order that he might be close at hand to confer with that great man. The rooms had a private entrance, too, were newly decorated, and in them the young couple proposed to live; the kitchen and garrets being theirs likewise. What more could they need? We are obliged to be particular in describing these apartments, for extraordinary events occurred therein.

To say the truth, until the present period Mr. Crampton had taken no great interest in his nephew's marriage, or, indeed, in the young man himself. The old gentleman was of a saturnine turn, and inclined to undervalue the qualities of Mr. Perkins, which were, idleness, simplicity, enthusiasm, and easy good-nature.

"Such fellows never do any thing in the world," he would say, and for such he had accordingly the most profound contempt. But when, after John Perkins's repeated entreaties, he had been induced to make the acquaintance of Miss Gorgon, he became instantly charmed with her, and warmly espoused her cause against her overbearing relations.

At his suggestion, she wrote back to decline Sir George Gorgon's peremptory invitation, and hinted at the same time that she had attained an age and a position which enabled her to be the mistress of her own actions. To this letter there came an answer from Lady Gorgon which we shall not copy, but which simply stated, that Miss Lucy Gorgon's conduct was unchristian, ungrateful, unladylike, and immodest; that the Gorgon family disowned her for the future, and left her at liberty to form whatever base connections she pleased.

"A pretty world this," said Mr. Crampton, in a great rage, when the letter was shown to him. "This same fellow, Scully, dissuades my nephew from taking a place, because Scully wants it for himself. This prude of a Lady Gorgon cries out shame, and disowns an innocent amiable girl; she, a heartless jilt herself once, and a heartless flirt now. The Pharisees, the Pharisees! And to call mine a base family, too!"

Now, Lady Gorgon did not in the least know Mr. Crampton's connection with Mr. Perkins, or she would have been much more guarded in her language; but whether she knew it or not, the old gentleman felt a huge indignation, and determined to have his revenge.

"That's right, uncle; *shall* I call Gorgon out?" said the impetuous young Perkins, who was all for blood.

"John, you are a fool," said his uncle. "You shall have a better revenge; you shall be married from Sir George Gorgon's house, and you shall see Mr. William Pitt Scully sold for nothing." This to the veteran diplomatist, seemed to be the highest triumph which man could possibly enjoy.

It was very soon to take place; and as has been the case ever since the world began, woman, lovely woman was to be the cause of Scully's fall. The tender scene at Lord Mantrap's was followed by many others equally sentimental. Sir George Gorgon called upon his colleague the very next day, and brought with him a card from Lady Gorgon, inviting Mr. Scully to dinner. The attorney eagerly accepted the invitation, was received in Baker-street by the whole amiable family with much respectful cordiality, and was pressed to repeat his visits as country neighbours should. More than once did he call, and somehow always at the hour when Sir George was away at his club, or riding in the park, or elsewhere engaged. Sir George Gorgon was very old, very feeble, very much shattered in constitution. Lady Gorgon used to impart her fears to Mr. Scully every time he called there, and the sympathizing attorney used to console her as best he might. Sir George's country agent neglected the property — his lady consulted Mr. Scully concerning it; he knew to a fraction how large her jointure was; how she was to have Gorgon Castle for her life; and how, in the event of the young baronet's death, (he, too, was a sickly poor boy,) the chief part of the estates, bought by her money, would be at her absolute disposal.

"What a pity these odious politics prevent me from having you for our agent," would Lady Gorgon say; and indeed Scully thought it was a pity too. Ambitious Scully! what wild notions filled his brain. He used to take leave of Lady Gorgon and ruminate upon these things; and when he was gone, Sir George and her ladyship used to laugh.

"If we can but commit him — if we can but make him vote for Pincher," said the General, "my peerage is secure. Hawksby and Crampton as good as told me so."

The point had been urged upon Mr. Scully repeatedly and adroitly. "Is not Pincher a more experienced man than Macabaw?" would Sir George say to his guest over their wine. Scully allowed it. "Can't you vote for him on personal grounds, and say so in the house?" Scully wished he could, — how he wished he could! Every time the general coughed, Scully saw his friend's desperate situation more and more, and thought how pleasant it would be to be Lord of Gorgon Castle. "Knowing my property," cried Sir George, "as you do, and with your talents and integrity, what a comfort it would be could I leave you as guardian to my boy! But these cursed politics prevent it, my dear fellow. Why *will* you be a Radical?" And Scully cursed politics too. "Hang the low-bred rogue," added Sir George, when William Pitt Scully left the house, "he will do every thing but promise."

"My dear General," said Lady Gorgon, sidling up to him and patting him on his old yellow cheek — "my dear Georgy, tell me one thing, — are you jealous?"

"Jealous, my dear! and jealous of *that* fellow — pshaw!"

"Well, then, give me leave, and you shall have the promise to-morrow."

. . . . . .

To-morrow arrived. It was a remarkably fine day, and in the forenoon Mr. Perkins gave his accustomed knock at Scully's study, which was only separated from his own sitting-room by a double door. John had wisely followed his uncle's advice, and was on the best terms with the honourable member.

"Here are a few sentences," said he, "which I think may suit your purpose. Great public services — undeniable merit — years of integrity — cause of reform, and Macabaw for ever!" He put down the paper. It was, in fact, a speech in favour of Mr. Macabaw.

"Hush," said Scully, rather surlily, for he was thinking how disagreeable it was to support Macabaw, and besides, there were clerks in the room, whom the thoughtless Perkins had not at first perceived. As soon as that gentleman saw them, "You are busy, I see," continued he, in a lower tone. "I came to say, that I must be off duty to-day, for I am engaged to take a walk with some ladies of my acquaintance."

So saying, the light-hearted young man placed his hat unceremoniously on his head, and went off through his own door, humming a song. He was in such high spirits, that he did not even think of closing the doors of communication, and Scully looked after him with a sneer.

"Ladies, forsooth," thought he; "I know who they are. This precious girl that he is fooling with, for one, I suppose." He was right, Perkins was off on the wings of love, to see Miss Lucy; and she, and aunt Biggs, and uncle Crampton had promised this very day to come and look at the apartments which Mrs. John Perkins was to occupy with her happy husband.

"Poor devil," so continued Mr. Scully's meditations, "it is almost too bad to do him out of his place, but my Bob wants it, and John's girl has, I hear, seven thousand pounds. His uncle will get him another place before all that money is spent;" and herewith Mr. Scully began conning the speech which Perkins had made for him.

He had not read it more than six times, — in truth, he was getting it by heart, — when his head-clerk came to him from the front room, bearing a card: a footman had brought it, who said his lady was waiting below. Lady Gorgon's name was on the card! To seize his hat and rush down stairs was, with Mr. Scully, the work of an infinitesimal portion of time.

It was indeed Lady Gorgon, in her Gorgonian chariot.

"Mr. Scully," said she, popping her head out of window and smiling in a most engaging way, "I want to speak to you on some thing very par-

ticular *indeed*," and she held him out her hand. Scully pressed it most tenderly; he hoped all heads in Bedford-row were at the windows to see him. "I can't ask you into the carriage, for you see the governess is with me, and I want to talk secrets to you."

"Shall I go and make a little promenade?" said mademoiselle, innocently. And her mistress hated her for that speech.

"No. Mr. Scully, I am sure, will let me come in for five minutes."

Mr. Scully was only too happy. My lady descended, and walked up stairs, leaning on the happy solicitor's arm. But how should he manage? The front room was consecrated to clerks; there were clerks, too, as ill-luck would have it, in his private room. "Perkins is out for the day," thought Scully; "I will take her into his room;" and into Perkins's room he took her — ay, and he shut the double doors after him, too, and trembled as he thought of his own happiness.

"What a charming little study," said Lady Gorgon, seating herself. And indeed it was very pretty, for Perkins had furnished it beautifully, and laid out a neat tray with cakes, and cold fowl, and sherry, to entertain his party withal. "And do you bachelors always live so well?" continued she, pointing to the little cold collation.

Mr. Scully looked rather blank when he saw it, and a dreadful suspicion crossed his soul; but there was no need to trouble Lady Gorgon with explanations, therefore, at once, and with much presence of mind, he asked her to partake of his bachelor's fare (she would refuse Mr. Scully nothing that day). A pretty sight would it have been for young Perkins to see strangers so unceremoniously devouring his feast. She drank — Mr. Scully drank — and so emboldened was he by the draught, that he actually seated himself by the side of Lady Gorgon, on John Perkins's new sofa!

Her ladyship had of course something to say to him. She was a pious woman, and had suddenly conceived a violent wish for building a chapel-of-ease at Oldborough, to which she entreated him to subscribe. She enlarged upon the benefits that the town would derive from it, spoke of Sunday-schools, sweet spiritual instruction, and the duty of all well-minded persons to give aid to the scheme.

"I will subscribe a hundred pounds," said Scully, at the end of her ladyship's harangue: "would I not do any thing for you?"

"Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Scully," said the enthusiastic woman. (How the "dear" went burning through his soul!) "Ah!" added she, "if you *would* but do any thing for me — if you, who are so eminently, so truly distinguished, in a religious point of view, would but see the truth in politics, too; and if I could see your name among those of the true patriot party in this empire, how blest — oh! how blest, should I be! Poor Sir George often says he should go to his grave happy, could he but see you the guardian of his boy, and I, your old friend, (for we *were*

friends, William,) how have I wept to think of you, as one of those who are bringing our monarchy to ruin. Do, do, promise me this too!" and she took his hand and pressed it between hers.

The heart of William Pitt Scully, during this speech, was thumping up and down with a frightful velocity and strength. His old love, the agency of the Gorgon property — the dear widow — five thousand a-year clear — a thousand delicious hopes rushed madly through his brain, and almost took away his reason. And there she sat — she, the loved one, pressing his hand and looking softly into his eyes.

Down, down, he plumped on his knees.

"Juliana!" shrieked he, "don't take away your hand! My love — my only love! — speak but those blessed words again! Call me William once more, and do with me what you will."

Juliana cast down her eyes and said, in the very smallest type,

"William!"

. . . . . .

when the door opened, and in walked Mr. Crampton, leading Mrs. Biggs, who could hardly contain herself for laughing, and Mr. John Perkins, who was squeezing the arm of Miss Lucy. They had heard every word of the two last speeches.

For at the very moment when Lady Gorgon had stopped at Mr. Scully's door, the four above-named individuals had issued from Great James-street into Bedford-row. Lucy cried out that it was her aunt's carriage, and they all saw Mr. Scully come out, bare-headed, in the sunshine, and my lady descend, and the pair go into the house. They meanwhile entered by Mr. Perkins's own private door, and had been occupied in examining the delightful rooms on the ground floor, which were to be his dining-room and library, from which they ascended a stair to visit the other two rooms, which were to form Mrs. John Perkins's drawing-room and bed-room. Now whether it was that they trod softly, or that the stairs were covered with a grand new carpet and drugget, as was the case, or that the party within were too much occupied in themselves to heed any outward disturbances, I know not; but Lucy, who was advancing with John, (he was saying something about one of the apartments, the rogue!) — Lucy suddenly started, and whispered, "There is somebody in the rooms!" and at that instant began the speech already reported, "*Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Scully,*" &c., &c., which was delivered by Lady Gorgon, in a full, clear voice; for, to do her ladyship justice, *she* had not one single grain of love for Mr. Scully, and, during the delivery of her little oration, was as cool as the coolest cucumber.

Then began the impassioned rejoinder to which the four listened on the landing-place; and then the little "*William,*" as narrated above; at which juncture Mr. Crampton thought proper to rattle at the door, and after a brief pause, to enter with his party.

"William" had had time to bounce off his knees, and was on a chair at the other end of the room.

"What, Lady Gorgon!" said Mr. Crampton, with excellent surprise, "how delighted I am to see you! Always, I see, employed in works of charity, (the chapel-of-ease paper was on her knees,) and on such an occasion, too, — it is really the most wonderful coincidence! My dear madam, here is a silly fellow, a nephew of mine, who is going to marry a silly girl, a niece of your own."

"Sir, I —" began Lady Gorgon, rising.

"They heard every word," whispered Mr. Crampton, eagerly. "Come forward, Mr. Perkins, and show yourself." Mr. Perkins made a genteel bow. "Miss Lucy, please to shake hands with your aunt; and this, my dear madam, is Mrs. Biggs, of Mecklenburgh-square, who, if she were not too old, might marry a gentleman in the treasury, who is your very humble servant; and with this gallant speech, old Mr. Crampton began helping every body to sherry and cake.

As for William Pitt Scully, he had disappeared, evaporated, in the most absurd, sneaking way imaginable. Lady Gorgon made good her retreat presently, with much dignity, her countenance undismayed, and her face turned resolutely to the foe. . . .

About five days afterwards, that memorable contest took place in the House of Commons, in which the partisans of Mr. Macabaw were so very nearly getting him the speakership. On the day that the report of the debate appeared in the *Times*, there appeared also an announcement in the *Gazette* as follows: —

"The king has been pleased to appoint John Perkins, Esq., to be Deputy-subcomptroller of his majesty's Tape-office, and Custos of the Sealing-wax department."

Mr. Crampton showed this to his nephew with great glee, and was chuckling to think how Mr. William Pitt Scully would be annoyed, who had expected the place, when Perkins burst out laughing, and said, "By Heavens! here is my own speech; Scully has spoken every word of it, he has only put in Mr. Pincher's name in the place of Mr. Macabaw's."

"He is ours now," responded his uncle, "and I told you *we would have him for nothing*. I told you, too, that you should be married from Sir George Gorgon's and here is proof of it."

It was a letter from Lady Gorgon, in which she said that, "had she known Mr. Perkins to be a nephew of her friend Mr. Crampton, she never for a moment would have opposed his marriage with her niece, and she had written that morning to her dear Lucy, begging that the marriage breakfast should take place in Baker-street."

"It shall be in Mecklenburgh-square," said John Perkins, stoutly; and in Mecklenburgh-square it was.

William Pitt Scully, Esq., was, as Mr. Crampton said, hugely annoyed

at the loss of the place for his nephew. He had still, however, his hopes to look forward to, but these were unluckily dashed by the coming in of the Whigs. As for Sir George Gorgon, when he came to ask about his peerage, Hawksby told him that they could not afford to lose him in the Commons, for a liberal member would infallibly fill his place.

And now that the Tories are out and the Whigs are in, strange to say a Liberal does fill his place. This Liberal is no other than Sir George Gorgon himself, who is still longing to be a lord, and his lady is still devout and intriguing. So that the members for Oldborough have changed sides, and taunt each other with apostacy, and hate each other cordially. Mr. Crampton still chuckles over the manner in which he tricked them both, and talks of those five minutes during which he stood on the landing-place, and hatched and executed his "Bedford-Row Conspiracy."

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

(1874–)

William Somerset Maugham was born at Paris in 1874, and educated first at Canterbury and later at Heidelberg, where he studied medicine. His career as a dramatist began in the early years of the present century, but his first novel, *Liza of Lambeth*, was written in 1895.

The best of Mr. Maugham's stories and short novels belong to the later years of his career. Of these the most striking are found in the collections *The Trembling of a Leaf* and *The Casuarina Tree*.

Rain was published in *The Trembling of a Leaf*, published by William Heinemann Ltd., London, 1921, and by George H. Doran Company, New York, same date. Copyright, 1921, by George H. Doran Company. The title of the story was originally *Miss Thompson*, but in later editions it has been altered to *Rain*. It is reprinted by permission of the author and his publishers.

RAIN

IT WAS nearly bed-time and when they awoke next morning land would be in sight. Dr. Macphail lit his pipe and, leaning over the rail, searched the heavens for the Southern Cross. After two years at the front and a wound that had taken longer to heal than it should, he was glad to settle down quietly at Apia for twelve months at least, and he felt already better for the journey. Since some of the passengers were leaving the ship next day at Pago-Pago they had had a little dance that evening and in his ears hammered still the harsh notes of the mechanical piano. But the deck was quiet at last. A little way off he saw his wife in a long chair talking with the Davidsons, and he strolled over to her. When he sat down under the light and took off his hat you saw that he had very red hair, with a bald patch on the crown, and the red, freckled skin which accompanies red hair; he was a man of forty, thin, with a pinched face, precise and rather pedantic; and he spoke with a Scots accent in a very low, quiet voice.

Between the Macphails and the Davidsons, who were missionaries, there had arisen the intimacy of shipboard, which is due to propinquity rather than to any community of taste. Their chief tie was the disapproval they shared of the men who spent their days and nights in the smoking-room playing poker or bridge and drinking. Mrs. Macphail was

not a little flattered to think that she and her husband were the only people on board with whom the Davidsons were willing to associate, and even the doctor, shy but no fool, half unconsciously acknowledged the compliment. It was only because he was of an argumentative mind that in their cabin at night he permitted himself to carp.

"Mrs. Davidson was saying she didn't know how they'd have got through the journey if it hadn't been for us," said Mrs. Macphail, as she neatly brushed out her transformation. "She said we were really the only people on the ship they cared to know."

"I shouldn't have thought a missionary was such a big bug that he could afford to put on frills."

"It's not frills. I quite understand what she means. It wouldn't have been very nice for the Davidsons to have to mix with all that rough lot in the smoking-room."

"The founder of their religion wasn't so exclusive," said Dr. Macphail with a chuckle.

"I've asked you over and over again not to joke about religion," answered his wife. "I shouldn't like to have a nature like yours, Alec. You never look for the best in people."

He gave her a side long glance with his pale, blue eyes, but did not reply. After many years of married life he had learned that it was more conducive to peace to leave his wife with the last word. He was undressed before she was, and climbing into the upper bunk he settled down to read himself to sleep.

When he came on deck next morning they were close to land. He looked at it with greedy eyes. There was a thin strip of silver beach rising quickly to hills covered to the top with luxuriant vegetation. The coconut trees, thick and green, came nearly to the water's edge, and among them you saw the grass houses of the Samoans; and here and there, gleaming white, a little church. Mrs. Davidson came and stood beside him. She was dressed in black and wore round her neck a gold chain, from which dangled a small cross. She was a little woman, with brown, dull hair very elaborately arranged, and she had prominent blue eyes behind invisible *pince-nez*. Her face was long, like a sheep's, but she gave no impression of foolishness, rather of extreme alertness; she had the quick movements of a bird. The most remarkable thing about her was her voice, high, metallic, and without inflection; it fell on the ear with a hard monotony, irritating to the nerves like the pitiless clamour of the pneumatic drill.

"This must seem like home to you," said Dr. Macphail, with his thin, difficult smile.

"Ours are low islands, you know, not like these. Coral. These are volcanic. We've got another ten days' journey to reach them."

"In these parts that's almost like being in the next street at home," said Dr. Macphail facetiously.

"Well, that's rather an exaggerated way of putting it, but one does look at distances differently in the South Seas. So far you're right."

Dr. Macphail sighed faintly.

"I'm glad we're not stationed here," she went on. "They say this is a terribly difficult place to work in. The steamers' touching makes the people unsettled; and then there's the naval station; that's bad for the natives. In our district we don't have difficulties like that to contend with. There are one or two traders, of course, but we take care to make them behave, and if they don't we make the place so hot for them they're glad to go."

Fixing the glasses on her nose she looked at the green island with a ruthless stare.

"It's almost a hopeless task for the missionaries here. I can never be sufficiently thankful to God that we are at least spared that."

Davidson's district consisted of a group of islands to the North of Samoa; they were widely separated and he had frequently to go long distances by canoe. At these times his wife remained at their headquarters and managed the mission. Dr. Macphail felt his heart sink when he considered the efficiency with which she certainly managed it. She spoke of the depravity of the natives in a voice which nothing could hush, but with a vehemently unctuous horror. Her sense of delicacy was singular. Early in their acquaintance she had said to him:

"You know, their marriage customs when we first settled in the islands were so shocking that I couldn't possibly describe them to you. But I'll tell Mrs. Macphail and she'll tell you."

Then he had seen his wife and Mrs. Davidson, their deck-chairs close together, in earnest conversation for about two hours. As he walked past them backwards and forwards for the sake of exercise, he had heard Mrs. Davidson's agitated whisper, like the distant flow of a mountain torrent, and he saw by his wife's open mouth and pale face that she was enjoying an alarming experience. At night in their cabin she repeated to him with bated breath all she had heard.

"Well, what did I say to you?" cried Mrs. Davidson, exultant, next morning. "Did you ever hear anything more dreadful? You don't wonder that I couldn't tell you myself, do you? Even though you are a doctor."

Mrs. Davidson scanned his face. She had a dramatic eagerness to see that she had achieved the desired effect.

"Can you wonder that when we first went there our hearts sank? You'll hardly believe me when I tell you it was impossible to find a single good girl in any of the villages."

She used the word *good* in a severely technical manner.

"Mr. Davidson and I talked it over, and we made up our minds the first thing to do was to put down the dancing. The natives were crazy about dancing."

"I was not averse to it myself when I was a young man," said Dr. Macphail.

"I guessed as much when I heard you ask Mrs. Macphail to have a turn with you last night. I don't think there's any real harm if a man dances with his wife, but I was relieved that she wouldn't. Under the circumstances I thought it better that we should keep ourselves to ourselves."

"Under what circumstances?"

Mrs. Davidson gave him a quick look through her *pince-nez*, but did not answer his question.

"But among white people it's not quite the same," she went on, "though I must say I agree with Mr. Davidson, who says he can't understand how a husband can stand by and see his wife in another man's arms, and as far as I'm concerned I've never danced a step since I married. But the native dancing is quite another matter. It's not only immoral in itself, but it distinctly leads to immorality. However, I'm thankful to God that we stamped it out, and I don't think I'm wrong in saying that no one has danced in our district for eight years."

But now they came to the mouth of the harbour and Mrs. Macphail joined them. The ship turned sharply and steamed slowly in. It was a great landlocked harbour big enough to hold a fleet of battleships; and all around it rose, high and steep, the green hills. Near the entrance, getting such breeze as blew from the sea, stood the governor's house in a garden. The Stars and Stripes dangled languidly from a flagstaff. They passed two or three trim bungalows, and a tennis court, and then they came to the quay with its warehouses. Mrs. Davidson pointed out the schooner, moored two or three hundred yards from the side, which was to take them to Apia. There was a crowd of eager, noisy, and good-humoured natives come from all parts of the island, some from curiosity, others to barter with the travellers on their way to Sydney; and they brought pineapples and huge bunches of bananas, *tapa* cloths, necklaces of shells or sharks' teeth, *kava*-bowls, and models of war canoes. American sailors, neat and trim, clean-shaven and frank of face, sauntered among them, and there was a little group of officials. While their luggage was being landed the Macphails and Mrs. Davidson watched the crowd. Dr. Macphail looked at the yaws from which most of the children and the young boys seemed to suffer, disfiguring sores like torpid ulcers, and his professional eyes glistened when he saw for the first time in his experience cases of elephantiasis, men going about with a huge, heavy arm or dragging along a grossly disfigured leg. Men and women wore the *lava-lava*.

"It's a very indecent costume," said Mrs. Davidson. "Mr. Davidson thinks it should be prohibited by law. How can you expect people to be moral when they wear nothing but a strip of red cotton round their loins?"

"It's suitable enough to the climate," said the doctor, wiping the sweat off his head.

Now that they were on land the heat, though it was so early in the morning, was already oppressive. Closed in by its hills, not a breath of air came in to Pago-Pago.

"In our islands," Mrs. Davidson went on in her high-pitched tones, "we've practically eradicated the *lava-lava*. A few old men still continue to wear it, but that's all. The women have all taken to the Mother Hubbard, and the men wear trousers and singlets. At the very beginning of our stay Mr. Davidson said in one of his reports: the inhabitants of these islands will never be thoroughly Christianised till every boy of more than ten years is made to wear a pair of trousers."

But Mrs. Davidson had given two or three of her birdlike glances at heavy grey clouds that came floating over the mouth of the harbour. A few drops began to fall.

"We'd better take shelter," she said.

They made their way with all the crowd to a great shed of corrugated iron, and the rain began to fall in torrents. They stood there for some time and then were joined by Mr. Davidson. He had been polite enough to the Macphails during the journey, but he had not his wife's sociability, and had spent much of his time reading. He was a silent, rather sullen man, and you felt that his affability was a duty that he imposed upon himself Christianly; he was by nature reserved and even morose. His appearance was singular. He was very tall and thin, with long limbs loosely jointed; hollow cheeks and curiously high cheek-bones; he had so cadaverous an air that it surprised you to notice how full and sensual were his lips. He wore his hair very long. His dark eyes, set deep in their sockets, were large and tragic; and his hands with their big, long fingers, were finely shaped; they gave him a look of great strength. But the most striking thing about him was the feeling he gave you of suppressed fire. It was impressive and vaguely troubling. He was not a man with whom any intimacy was possible.

He brought now unwelcome news. There was an epidemic of measles, a serious and often fatal disease among the Kanakas, on the island, and a case had developed among the crew of the schooner which was to take them on their journey. The sick man had been brought ashore and put in hospital on the quarantine station, but telegraphic instructions had been sent from Apia to say that the schooner would not be allowed to enter the harbour till it was certain no other member of the crew was affected.

"It means we shall have to stay here for ten days at least."

"But I'm urgently needed at Apia," said Dr. Macphail.

"That can't be helped. If no more cases develop on board, the schooner will be allowed to sail with white passengers, but all native traffic is prohibited for three months."

"Is there a hotel here?" asked Mrs. Macphail.

Davidson gave a low chuckle.

"There's not."

"What shall we do then?"

"I've been talking to the governor. There's a trader along the front who has rooms that he rents, and my proposition is that as soon as the rain lets up we should go along there and see what we can do. Don't expect comfort. You've just got to be thankful if we get a bed to sleep on and a roof over our heads."

But the rain showed no sign of stopping, and at length with umbrellas and waterproofs they set out. There was no town, but merely a group of official buildings, a store or two, and at the back, among the coconut trees and plantains, a few native dwellings. The house they sought was about five minutes' walk from the wharf. It was a frame house of two storeys, with broad verandahs on both floors and a roof of corrugated iron. The owner was a half-caste named Horn, with a native wife surrounded by little brown children, and on the ground-floor he had a store where he sold canned goods and cottons. The rooms he showed them were almost bare of furniture. In the Macphails' there was nothing but a poor, worn bed with a ragged mosquito net, a rickety chair, and a washstand. They looked round with dismay. The rain poured down without ceasing.

"I'm not going to unpack more than we actually need," said Mrs. Macphail.

Mrs. Davidson came into the room as she was unlocking a portmanteau. She was very brisk and alert. The cheerless surroundings had no effect on her.

"If you'll take my advice you'll get a needle and cotton and start right in to mend the mosquito net," she said, "or you'll not be able to get a wink of sleep to-night."

"Will they be very bad?" asked Dr. Macphail.

"This is the season for them. When you're asked to a party at Government House at Apia you'll notice that all the ladies are given a pillowslip to put their — their lower extremities in."

"I wish the rain would stop for a moment," said Mrs. Macphail. "I could try to make the place comfortable with more heart if the sun were shining."

"Oh, if you wait for that, you'll wait a long time. Pago-Pago is about the rainiest place in the Pacific. You see, the hills, and that bay, they attract the water, and one expects rain at this time of year anyway."

She looked from Macphail to his wife, standing helplessly in different parts of the room, like lost souls, and she pursed her lips. She saw that she must take them in hand. Feckless people like that made her impatient, but her hands itched to put everything in the order which came so naturally to her.

"Here, you give me a needle and cotton and I'll mend that net of yours, while you go on with your unpacking. Dinner's at one. Dr. Macphail, you'd better go down to the wharf and see that your heavy luggage has been put in a dry place. You know what these natives are, they're quite capable of storing it where the rain will beat in on it all the time."

The doctor put on his waterproof again and went downstairs. At the door Mr. Horn was standing in conversation with the quartermaster of the ship they had just arrived in and a second-class passenger whom Dr. Macphail had seen several times on board. The quartermaster, a little, shrivelled man, extremely dirty, nodded to him as he passed.

"This is a bad job about the measles, doc," he said, "I see you've fixed yourself up already."

Dr. Macphail thought he was rather familiar, but he was a timid man and he did not take offence easily.

"Yes, we've got a room upstairs."

"Miss Thompson was sailing with you to Apia, so I've brought her along here."

The quartermaster pointed with his thumb to the woman standing by his side. She was twenty-seven perhaps, plump, and in a coarse fashion pretty. She wore a white dress and a large white hat. Her fat calves in white cotton stockings bulged over the tops of long white boots in glacé kid. She gave Macphail an ingratiating smile.

"The feller's tryin' to soak me a dollar and a half a day for the meanest sized room," she said in a hoarse voice.

"I tell you she's a friend of mine, Jo," said the quartermaster. "She can't pay more than a dollar, and you've sure got to take her for that."

The trader was fat and smooth and quietly smiling.

"Well, if you put it like that, Mr. Swan, I'll see what I can do about it. I'll talk to Mrs. Horn and if we think we can make a reduction we will."

"Don't try to pull that stuff with me," said Miss Thompson. "We'll settle this right now. You get a dollar a day for the room and not one bean more."

Dr. Macphail smiled. He admired the effrontery with which she bargained. He was the sort of man who always paid what he was asked. He preferred to be over-charged than to haggle. The trader sighed.

"Well, to oblige Mr. Swan I'll take it."

"That's the goods," said Miss Thompson. "Come right in and have a shot of hooch. I've got some real good rye in that grip if you'll bring it along, Mr. Swan. You come along too, doctor."

"Oh, I don't think I will, thank you," he answered. "I'm just going down to see that our luggage is all right."

He stepped out into the rain. It swept in from the opening of the har-

bour in sheets and the opposite shore was all blurred. He passed two or three natives clad in nothing but the *lava-lava*, with huge umbrellas over them. They walked finely, with leisurely movements, very upright; and they smiled and greeted him in a strange tongue as they went by.

It was nearly dinner-time when he got back, and their meal was laid in the trader's parlour. It was a room designed not to live in but for purposes of prestige, and it had a musty, melancholy air. A suite of stamped plush was arranged neatly round the walls, and from the middle of the ceiling, protected from the flies by yellow tissue paper, hung a gilt chandelier. Davidson did not come.

"I know he went to call on the governor," said Mrs. Davidson, "and I guess he's kept him to dinner."

A little native girl brought them a dish of Hamburger steak, and after a while the trader came up to see that they had everything they wanted.

"I see we have a fellow lodger, Mr. Horn," said Dr. Macphail.

"She's taken a room, that's all," answered the trader. "She's getting her own board."

He looked at the two ladies with an obsequious air.

"I put her downstairs so she shouldn't be in the way. She won't be any trouble to you."

"Is it someone who was on the boat?" asked Mrs. Macphail.

"Yes, ma'am, she was in the second cabin. She was going to Apia. She has a position as cashier waiting for her."

"Oh!"

When the trader was gone Macphail said:

"I shouldn't think she'd find it exactly cheerful having her meals in her room."

"If she was in the second cabin I guess she'd rather," answered Mrs. Davidson. "I don't exactly know who it can be."

"I happened to be there when the quartermaster brought her along. Her name's Thompson."

"It's not the woman who was dancing with the quartermaster last night?" asked Mrs. Davidson.

"That's who it must be," said Mrs. Macphail. "I wondered at the time what she was. She looked rather fast to me."

"Not good style at all," said Mrs. Davidson.

They began to talk of other things, and after dinner, tired with their early rise, they separated and slept. When they awoke, though the sky was still grey and the clouds hung low, it was not raining and they went for a walk on the high road which the Americans had built along the bay.

On their return they found that Davidson had just come in.

"We may be here for a fortnight," he said irritably. "I've argued it out with the governor, but he says there is nothing to be done."

"Mr. Davidson's just longing to get back to his work," said his wife, with an anxious glance at him.

"We've been away for a year," he said, walking up and down the verandah. "The mission has been in charge of native missionaries and I'm terribly nervous that they've let things slide. They're good men, I'm not saying a word against them, God-fearing, devout, and truly Christian men — their Christianity would put many so-called Christians at home to the blush — but they're pitifully lacking in energy. They can make a stand once, they can make a stand twice, but they can't make a stand all the time. If you leave a mission in charge of a native missionary, no matter how trustworthy he seems, in course of time you'll find he's let abuses creep in."

Mr. Davidson stood still. With his tall, spare form, and his great eyes flashing out of his pale face, he was an impressive figure. His sincerity was obvious in the fire of his gestures and in his deep, ringing voice.

"I expect to have my work cut out for me. I shall act and I shall act promptly. If the tree is rotten it shall be cut down and cast into the flames."

And in the evening after the high tea which was their last meal, while they sat in the stiff parlour, the ladies working and Dr. Macphail smoking his pipe, the missionary told them of his work in the islands.

"When we went there they had no sense of sin at all," he said. "They broke the commandments one after the other and never knew they were doing wrong. And I think that was the most difficult part of my work, to instil into the natives the sense of sin."

The Macphails knew already that Davidson had worked in the Solomons for five years before he met his wife. She had been a missionary in China, and they had become acquainted in Boston, where they were both spending part of their leave to attend a missionary congress. On their marriage they had been appointed to the islands in which they had laboured ever since.

In the course of all the conversations they had had with Mr. Davidson one thing had shone out clearly and that was the man's unflinching courage. He was a medical missionary, and he was liable to be called at any time to one or other of the islands in the group. Even the whaleboat is not so very safe a conveyance in the stormy Pacific of the wet season, but often he would be sent for in a canoe, and then the danger was great. In cases of illness or accident he never hesitated. A dozen times he had spent the whole night baling for his life, and more than once Mrs. Davidson had given him up for lost.

"I'd beg him not to go sometimes," she said, "or at least to wait till the weather was more settled, but he'd never listen. He's obstinate, and when he's once made up his mind, nothing can move him."

"How can I ask the natives to put their trust in the Lord if I am afraid to do so myself?" cried Davidson. "And I'm not, I'm not. They know that if they send for me in their trouble I'll come if it's humanly

possible. And do you think the Lord is going to abandon me when I am on his business? The wind blows at his bidding and the waves toss and rage at his word."

Dr. Macphail was a timid man. He had never been able to get used to the hurtling of the shells over the trenches, and when he was operating in an advanced dressing-station the sweat poured from his brow and dimmed his spectacles in the effort he made to control his unsteady hand. He shuddered a little as he looked at the missionary.

"I wish I could say that I've never been afraid," he said.

"I wish you could say that you believed in God," retorted the other.

But for some reason, that evening the missionary's thoughts travelled back to the early days he and his wife had spent on the islands.

"Sometimes Mrs. Davidson and I would look at one another and the tears would stream down our cheeks. We worked without ceasing, day and night, and we seemed to make no progress. I don't know what I should have done without her then. When I felt my heart sink, when I was very near despair, she gave me courage and hope."

Mrs. Davidson looked down at her work, and a slight colour rose to her thin cheeks. Her hands trembled a little. She did not trust herself to speak.

"We had no one to help us. We were alone, thousands of miles from any of our people, surrounded by darkness. When I was broken and weary she would put her work aside and take the Bible and read to me till peace came and settled upon me like sleep upon the eyelids of a child, and when at last she closed the book she'd say: 'We'll save them in spite of themselves.' And I felt strong again in the Lord, and I answered: 'Yes, with God's help I'll save them. I must save them.'"

He came over to the table and stood in front of it as though it were a lectern.

"You see, they were so naturally depraved that they couldn't be brought to see their wickedness. We had to make sins out of what they thought were natural actions. We had to make it a sin, not only to commit adultery and to lie and thieve, but to expose their bodies, and to dance and not to come to church. I made it a sin for a girl to show her bosom and a sin for a man not to wear trousers."

"How?" asked Dr. Macphail, not without surprise.

"I instituted fines. Obviously the only way to make people realise that an action is sinful is to punish them if they commit it. I fined them if they didn't come to church, and I fined them if they danced. I fined them if they were improperly dressed. I had a tariff, and every sin had to be paid for either in money or work. And at last I made them understand."

"But did they never refuse to pay?"

"How could they?" asked the missionary.

"It would be a brave man who tried to stand up against Mr. Davidson," said his wife, tightening her lips.

Dr. Macphail looked at Davidson with troubled eyes. What he heard shocked him, but he hesitated to express his disapproval.

"You must remember that in the last resort I could expel them from their church membership."

"Did they mind that?"

Davidson smiled a little and gently rubbed his hands.

"They couldn't sell their copra. When the men fished they got no share of the catch. It meant something very like starvation. Yes, they minded quite a lot."

"Tell him about Fred Ohlson," said Mrs. Davidson.

The missionary fixed his fiery eyes on Dr. Macphail.

"Fred Ohlson was a Danish trader who had been in the islands a good many years. He was a pretty rich man as traders go and he wasn't very pleased when we came. You see, he'd had things very much his own way. He paid the natives what he liked for their copra, and he paid in goods and whiskey. He had a native wife, but he was flagrantly unfaithful to her. He was a drunkard. I gave him a chance to mend his ways, but he wouldn't take it. He laughed at me."

Davidson's voice fell to a deep bass as he said the last words, and he was silent for a minute or two. The silence was heavy with menace.

"In two years he was a ruined man. He'd lost everything he'd saved in a quarter of a century. I broke him, and at last he was forced to come to me like a beggar and beseech me to give him a passage back to Sydney."

"I wish you could have seen him when he came to see Mr. Davidson," said the missionary's wife. "He had been a fine, powerful man, with a lot of fat on him, and he had a great big voice, but now he was half the size, and he was shaking all over. He'd suddenly become an old man."

With abstracted gaze Davidson looked out into the night. The rain was falling again.

Suddenly from below came a sound, and Davidson turned and looked questioningly at his wife. It was the sound of a gramophone, harsh and loud, wheezing out a syncopated tune.

"What's that?" he asked.

Mrs. Davidson fixed her *pince-nez* more firmly on her nose.

"One of the second-class passengers has a room in the house. I guess it comes from there."

They listened in silence, and presently they heard the sound of dancing. Then the music stopped, and they heard the popping of corks and voices raised in animated conversation.

"I daresay she's giving a farewell party to her friends on board," said Dr. Macphail. "The ship sails at twelve, doesn't it?"

Davidson made no remark, but he looked at his watch.

"Are you ready?" he asked his wife.

She got up and folded her work.

"Yes, I guess I am," she answered.

"It's early to go to bed yet, isn't it?" said the doctor.

"We have a good deal of reading to do," explained Mrs. Davidson. "Wherever we are, we read a chapter of the Bible before retiring for the night and we study it with the commentaries, you know, and discuss it thoroughly. It's a wonderful training for the mind."

The two couples bade one another good night. Dr. and Mrs. Macphail were left alone. For two or three minutes they did not speak.

"I think I'll go and fetch the cards," the doctor said at last.

Mrs. Macphail looked at him doubtfully. Her conversation with the Davidsons had left her a little uneasy, but she did not like to say that she thought they had better not play cards when the Davidsons might come in at any moment. Dr. Macphail brought them and she watched him, though with a vague sense of guilt, while he laid out his patience. Below the sound of revelry continued.

It was fine enough next day, and the Macphails, condemned to spend a fortnight of idleness at Pago-Pago, set about making the best of things. They went down to the quay and got out of their boxes a number of books. The doctor called on the chief surgeon of the naval hospital and went round the beds with him. They left cards on the governor. They passed Miss Thompson on the road. The doctor took off his hat, and she gave him a "Good morning, doc.," in a loud, cheerful voice. She was dressed as on the day before, in a white frock, and her shiny white boots with their high heels, her fat legs bulging over the tops of them, were strange things on that exotic scene.

"I don't think she's very suitably dressed, I must say," said Mrs. Macphail. "She looks extremely common to me."

When they got back to their house, she was on the verandah playing with one of the trader's dark children.

"Say a word to her," Dr. Macphail whispered to his wife. "She's all alone here, and it seems rather unkind to ignore her."

Mrs. Macphail was shy, but she was in the habit of doing what her husband bade her.

"I think we're fellow lodgers here," she said, rather foolishly.

"Terrible, ain't it, bein' cooped up in a one-horse burg like this?" answered Miss Thompson. "And they tell me I'm lucky to have gotten a room. I don't see myself livin' in a native house, and that's what some have to do. I don't know why they don't have a hotel."

They exchanged a few more words. Miss Thompson, loud-voiced and garrulous, was evidently quite willing to gossip, but Mrs. Macphail had a poor stock of small talk and presently she said:

"Well, I think we must go upstairs."

In the evening when they sat down to their high-tea Davidson on coming in said:

"I see that woman downstairs has a couple of sailors sitting there. I wonder how she's gotten acquainted with them."

"She can't be very particular," said Mrs. Davidson.

They were all rather tired after the idle, aimless day.

"If there's going to be a fortnight of this I don't know what we shall feel like at the end of it," said Dr. Macphail.

"The only thing to do is to portion out the day to different activities," answered the missionary, "I shall set aside a certain number of hours to study and a certain number to exercise, rain or fine — in the wet season you can't afford to pay any attention to the rain — and a certain number to recreation."

Dr. Macphail looked at his companion with misgiving. Davidson's programme oppressed him. They were eating Hamburger steak again. It seemed the only dish the cook knew how to make. Then below the gramophone began. Davidson started nervously when he heard it, but said nothing. Men's voices floated up. Miss Thompson's guests were joining in a well-known song and presently they heard her voice too, hoarse and loud. There was a good deal of shouting and laughing. The four people upstairs, trying to make conversation, listened despite themselves to the clink of glasses and the scrape of chairs. More people had evidently come. Miss Thompson was giving a party.

"I wonder how she gets them all in," said Mrs. Macphail, suddenly breaking into a medical conversation between the missionary and her husband.

It showed whither her thoughts were wandering. The twitch of Davidson's face proved that, though he spoke of scientific things, his mind was busy in the same direction. Suddenly, while the doctor was giving some experience of practice on the Flanders front, rather prosily, he sprang to his feet with a cry.

"What's the matter, Alfred?" asked Mrs. Davidson.

"Of course! It never occurred to me. She's out of Iwelei."

"She can't be."

"She came on board at Honolulu. It's obvious. And she's carrying on her trade here. Here."

He uttered the last word with a passion of indignation.

"What's Iwelei?" asked Mrs. Macphail.

He turned his gloomy eyes on her and his voice trembled with horror.

"The plague spot of Honolulu. The Red Light district. It was a blot on our civilization."

Iwelei was on the edge of the city. You went down side streets by the harbour, in the darkness, across a rickety bridge, till you came to a deserted road, all ruts and holes, and then suddenly you came out into the

light. There was parking room for motors on each side of the road, and there were saloons, tawdry and bright, each one noisy with its mechanical piano, and there were barbers' shops and tobacconists. There was a stir in the air and a sense of expectant gaiety. You turned down a narrow alley, either to the right or to the left, for the road divided Iwelei into two parts, and you found yourself in the district. There were rows of little bungalows, trim and neatly painted in green, and the pathway between them was broad and straight. It was laid out like a garden-city. In its respectable regularity, its order and spruceness, it gave an impression of sardonic horror; for never can the search for love have been so systematised and ordered. The pathways were lit by a rare lamp, but they would have been dark except for the lights that came from the open windows of the bungalows. Men wandered about, looking at the women who sat at their windows, reading or sewing, for the most part taking no notice of the passers-by; and like the women they were of all nationalities. There were Americans, sailors from the ships in port, enlisted men off the gunboats, sombrely drunk, and soldiers from the regiments, white and black, quartered on the island; there were Japanese, walking in twos and threes; Hawaiians, Chinese in long robes, and Filipinos in preposterous hats. They were silent and as it were oppressed. Desire is sad.

"It was the most crying scandal of the Pacific," exclaimed Davidson vehemently. "The missionaries had been agitating against it for years, and at last the local press took it up. The police refused to stir. You know their argument. They say that vice is inevitable and consequently the best thing is to localise and control it. The truth is, they were paid. Paid. They were paid by the saloon-keepers, paid by the bullies, paid by the women themselves. At last they were forced to move."

"I read about it in the papers that came on board in Honolulu," said Dr. Macphail.

"Iwelei, with its sin and shame, ceased to exist on the very day we arrived. The whole population was brought before the justices. I don't know why I didn't understand at once what that woman was."

"Now you come to speak of it." said Mrs. Macphail, "I remember seeing her come on board only a few minutes before the boat sailed. I remember thinking at the time she was cutting it rather fine."

"How dare she come here!" cried Davidson indignantly. "I'm not going to allow it."

He strode towards the door.

"What are you going to do?" asked Macphail.

"What do you expect me to do? I'm going to stop it. I'm not going to have this house turned into — into . . ."

He sought for a word that should not offend the ladies' ears. His eyes were flashing and his pale face was paler still in his emotion.

"It sounds as though there were three or four men down there," said the doctor. "Don't you think it's rather rash to go in just now?"

The missionary gave him a contemptuous look and without a word flung out of the room.

"You know Mr. Davidson very little if you think the fear of personal danger can stop him in the performance of his duty," said his wife.

She sat with her hands nervously clasped, a spot of colour on her high cheek bones, listening to what was about to happen below. They all listened. They heard him clatter down the wooden stairs and throw open the door. The singing stopped suddenly, but the gramophone continued to bray out its vulgar tune. They heard Davidson's voice and then the noise of something heavy falling. The music stopped. He had hurled the gramophone on the floor. Then again they heard Davidson's voice, they could not make out the words, then Miss Thompson's, loud and shrill, then a confused clamour as though several people were shouting together at the top of their lungs. Mrs. Davidson gave a little gasp, and she clenched her hands more tightly. Dr. Macphail looked uncertainly from her to his wife. He did not want to go down, but he wondered if they expected him to. Then there was something that sounded like a scuffle. The noise now was more distinct. It might be that Davidson was being thrown out of the room. The door was slammed. There was a moment's silence and they heard Davidson come up the stairs again. He went to his room.

"I think I'll go to him," said Mrs. Davidson.

She got up and went out.

"If you want me, just call," said Mrs. Macphail, and then when the other was gone: "I hope he isn't hurt."

"Why couldn't he mind his own business?" said Dr. Macphail.

They sat in silence for a minute or two and then they both started, for the gramophone began to play once more, defiantly, and mocking voices shouted hoarsely the words of an obscene song.

Next day Mrs. Davidson was pale and tired. She complained of headache, and she looked old and wizened. She told Mrs. Macphail that the missionary had not slept at all; he had passed the night in a state of frightful agitation and at five had got up and gone out. A glass of beer had been thrown over him and his clothes were stained and stinking. But a sombre fire glowed in Mrs. Davidson's eyes when she spoke of Miss Thompson.

"She'll bitterly rue the day when she flouted Mr. Davidson," she said. "Mr. Davidson has a wonderful heart and no one who is in trouble has ever gone to him without being comforted, but he has no mercy for sin, and when his righteous wrath is excited he's terrible."

"Why, what will he do?" asked Mrs. Macphail.

"I don't know, but I wouldn't stand in that creature's shoes for anything in the world."

Mrs. Macphail shuddered. There was something positively alarming in

the triumphant assurance of the little woman's manner. They were going out together that morning, and they went down the stairs side by side. Miss Thompson's door was open, and they saw her in a bedraggled dressing-gown, cooking something in a chafing-dish.

"Good morning," she called. "Is Mr. Davidson better this morning?"

They passed her in silence, with their noses in the air, as if she did not exist. They flushed, however, when she burst into a shout of derisive laughter. Mrs. Davidson turned on her suddenly.

"Don't you dare to speak to me," she screamed. "If you insult me I shall have you turned out of here."

"Say, did I ask Mr. Davidson to visit with me?"

"Don't answer her," whispered Mrs. Macphail hurriedly.

They walked on till they were out of earshot.

"She's brazen, brazen," burst from Mrs. Davidson.

Her anger almost suffocated her.

And on their way home they met her strolling towards the quay. She had all her finery on. Her great white hat with its vulgar, showy flowers was an affront. She called out cheerily to them as she went by, and a couple of American sailors who were standing there grinned as the ladies set their faces to an icy stare. They got in just before the rain began to fall again.

"I guess she'll get her fine clothes spoilt," said Mrs. Davidson with a bitter sneer.

Davidson did not come in till they were half way through dinner. He was wet through, but he would not change. He sat, morose and silent, refusing to eat more than a mouthful, and he stared at the slanting rain. When Mrs. Davidson told him of their two encounters with Miss Thompson he did not answer. His deepening frown alone showed that he had heard.

"Don't you think we ought to make Mr. Horn turn her out of here?" asked Mrs. Davidson. "We can't allow her to insult us."

"There doesn't seem to be any other place for her to go," said Macphail.

"She can live with one of the natives."

"In weather like this a native hut must be a rather uncomfortable place to live in."

"I lived in one for years," said the missionary.

When the little native girl brought in the fried bananas which formed the sweet they had every day, Davidson turned to her.

"Ask Miss Thompson when it would be convenient for me to see her," he said.

The girl nodded shyly and went out.

"What do you want to see her for, Alfred?" asked his wife.

"It's my duty to see her. I won't act till I've given her every chance."

"You don't know what she is. She'll insult you."

"Let her insult me. Let her spit on me. She has an immortal soul, and I must do all that is in my power to save it."

Mrs. Davidson's ears rang still with the harlot's mocking laughter.

"She's gone too far."

"Too far for the mercy of God?" His eyes lit up suddenly and his voice grew mellow and soft. "Never. The sinner may be deeper in sin than the depth of hell itself, but the love of the Lord Jesus can reach him still."

The girl came back with the message.

"Miss Thompson's compliments and as long as Rev. Davidson don't come in business hours she'll be glad to see him any time."

The party received it in stony silence, and Dr. Macphail quickly effaced from his lips the smile which had come upon them. He knew his wife would be vexed with him if he found Miss Thompson's effrontery amusing.

They finished the meal in silence. When it was over the two ladies got up and took their work, Mrs. Macphail was making another of the innumerable comforters which she had turned out since the beginning of the war, and the doctor lit his pipe. But Davidson remained in his chair and with abstracted eyes stared at the table. At last he got up and without a word went out of the room. They heard him go down and they heard Miss Thompson's defiant "Come in" when he knocked at the door. He remained with her for an hour. And Dr. Macphail watched the rain. It was beginning to get on his nerves. It was not like our soft English rain that drops gently on the earth; it was unmerciful and somehow terrible; you felt in it the malignancy of the primitive powers of nature. It did not pour, it flowed. It was like a deluge from heaven, and it rattled on the roof of corrugated iron with a steady persistence that was maddening. It seemed to have a fury of its own. And sometimes you felt that you must scream if it did not stop, and then suddenly you felt powerless, as though your bones had suddenly become soft; and you were miserable and hopeless.

Macphail turned his head when the missionary came back. The two women looked up.

"I've given her every chance. I have exhorted her to repent. She is an evil woman."

He paused, and Dr. Macphail saw his eyes darken and his pale face grow hard and stern.

"Now I shall take the whips with which the Lord Jesus drove the usurers and the money changers out of the Temple of the Most High."

He walked up and down the rooms. His mouth was close set, and his black brows were frowning.

"If she fled to the uttermost parts of the earth I should pursue her."

With a sudden movement he turned round and strode out of the room. They heard him go down-stairs again.

"What is he going to do?" asked Mrs. Macphail.

"I don't know." Mrs. Davidson took off her *pince-nez* and wiped them. "When he is on the Lord's work I never ask him questions."

She sighed a little.

"What is the matter?"

"He'll wear himself out. He doesn't know what it is to spare himself."

Dr. Macphail learnt the first results of the missionary's activity from the half-caste trader in whose house they lodged. He stopped the doctor when he passed the store and came out to speak to him on the stoop. His fat face was worried.

"The Rev. Davidson has been at me for letting Miss Thompson have a room here," he said, "but I didn't know what she was when I rented it to her. When people come and ask if I can rent them a room all I want to know is if they've the money to pay for it. And she paid me for hers a week in advance."

Dr. Macphail did not want to commit himself.

"When all's said and done it's your house. We're very much obliged to you for taking us in at all."

Horn looked at him doubtfully. He was not certain yet how definitely Macphail stood on the missionary's side.

"The missionaries are in with one another," he said, hesitatingly. "If they get it in for a trader he may just as well shut up his store and quit."

"Did he want you to turn her out?"

"No, he said so long as she behaved herself he couldn't ask me to do that. He said he wanted to be just to me. I promised she shouldn't have no more visitors. I've just been and told her."

"How did she take it?"

"She gave me Hell."

The trader squirmed in his old ducks. He had found Miss Thompson a rough customer.

"Oh, well, I daresay she'll get out. I don't suppose she wants to stay here if she can't have anyone in."

"There's nowhere she can go, only a native house, and no native'll take her now, not now that the missionaries have got their knife in her."

Dr. Macphail looked at the falling rain.

"Well, I don't suppose it's any good waiting for it to clear up."

In the evening when they sat in the parlour Davidson talked to them of his early days at college. He had had no means and had worked his way through by doing odd jobs during the vacations. There was silence downstairs. Miss Thompson was sitting in her little room alone. But suddenly the gramophone began to play. She had set it on in defiance, to cheat her loneliness, but there was no one to sing, and it had a melancholy note. It was like a cry for help. Davidson took no notice. He was in the middle of a long anecdote and without change of expression went on. The gramo-

phone continued. Miss Thompson put on one reel after another. It looked as though the silence of the night were getting on her nerves. It was breathless and sultry. When the Macphails went to bed they could not sleep. They lay side by side with their eyes wide open, listening to the cruel singing of the mosquitoes outside their curtain.

"What's that?" whispered Mrs. Macphail at last.

They heard a voice, Davidson's voice, through the wooden partition. It went on with a monotonous, earnest insistence. He was praying aloud. He was praying for the soul of Miss Thompson.

Two or three days went by. Now when they passed Miss Thompson on the road she did not greet them with ironic cordiality or smile; she passed with her nose in the air, a sulky look on her painted face, frowning, as though she did not see them. The trader told Macphail that she had tried to get lodging elsewhere, but had failed. In the evening she played through the various reels of her gramophone, but the pretence of mirth was obvious now. The ragtime had a cracked, heart-broken rhythm as though it were a one-step of despair. When she began to play on Sunday Davidson sent Horn to beg her to stop at once since it was the Lord's day. The reel was taken off and the house was silent except for the steady pattering of the rain on the iron roof.

"I think she's getting a bit worked up," said the trader next day to Macphail. "She don't know what Mr. Davidson's up to and it makes her scared."

Macphail had caught a glimpse of her that morning and it struck him that her arrogant expression had changed. There was in her face a hunted look. The half-caste gave him a sidelong glance.

"I suppose you don't know what Mr. Davidson is doing about it?" he hazarded.

"No, I don't."

It was singular that Horn should ask him that question, for he also had the idea that the missionary was mysteriously at work. He had an impression that he was weaving a net around the woman, carefully, systematically, and suddenly, when everything was ready would pull the strings tight.

"He told me to tell her," said the trader, "that if at any time she wanted him she only had to send and he'd come."

"What did she say when you told her that?"

"She didn't say nothing. I didn't stop, I just said what he said I was to and then I beat it. I thought she might be going to start weepin'."

"I have no doubt the loneliness is getting on her nerves," said the doctor. "And the rain — that's enough to make anyone jumpy," he continued irritably. "Doesn't it ever stop in this confounded place?"

"It goes on pretty steady in the rainy season. We have three hundred inches in the year. You see, it's the shape of the bay. It seems to attract the rain from all over the Pacific."

"Damn the shape of the bay," said the doctor.

He scratched his mosquito bites. He felt very short-tempered. When the rain stopped and the sun shone, it was like a hothouse, seething, humid, sultry, breathless, and you had a strange feeling that everything was growing with a savage violence. The natives, blithe and childlike by reputation, seemed then, with their tattooing and their dyed hair, to have something sinister in their appearance; and when they pattered along at your heels with their naked feet you looked back instinctively. You felt they might at any moment come behind you swiftly and thrust a long knife between your shoulder blades. You could not tell what dark thoughts lurked behind their wide-set eyes. They had a little the look of ancient Egyptians painted on a temple wall, and there was about them the terror of what is immeasurably old.

The missionary came and went. He was busy, but the Macphails did not know what he was doing. Horn told the doctor that he saw the governor every day, and once Davidson mentioned him.

"He looks as if he had plenty of determination," he said, "but when you come down to brass tacks he has no backbone."

"I suppose that means he won't do exactly what you want," suggested the doctor facetiously.

The missionary did not smile.

"I want him to do what's right. It shouldn't be necessary to persuade a man to do that."

"But there may be differences of opinion about what is right."

"If a man had a gangrenous foot would you have patience with anyone who hesitated to amputate it?"

"Gangrene is a matter of fact."

"And Evil?"

What Davidson had done soon appeared. The four of them had just finished their midday meal, and they had not yet separated for the siesta which the heat imposed on the ladies and on the doctor. Davidson had little patience with the slothful habit. The door was suddenly flung open and Miss Thompson came in. She looked round the room and then went up to Davidson.

"You low-down skunk, what have you been saying about me to the governor?"

She was spluttering with rage. There was a moment's pause. Then the missionary drew forward a chair.

"Won't you be seated, Miss Thompson? I've been hoping to have another talk with you."

"You poor low-life bastard."

She burst into a torrent of insult, foul and insolent. Davidson kept his grave eyes on her.

"I'm indifferent to the abuse you think fit to heap on me, Miss Thompson," he said, "but I must beg you to remember that ladies are present."

Tears by now were struggling with her anger. Her face was red and swollen as though she were choking.

"What has happened?" asked Dr. Macphail.

"A feller's just been in here and he says I gotter beat it on the next boat."

Was there a gleam in the missionary's eyes? His face remained impassive.

"You could hardly expect the governor to let you stay here under the circumstances."

"You done it," she shrieked. "You can't kid me. You done it."

"I don't want to deceive you. I urged the governor to take the only possible step consistent with his obligations."

"Why couldn't you leave me be? I wasn't doin' you no harm."

"You may be sure that if you had I should be the last man to resent it."

"Do you think I want to stay on in this poor imitation of a burg? I don't look no busher, do I?"

"In that case I don't see what cause of complaint you have," he answered.

She gave an inarticulate cry of rage and flung out of the room. There was a short silence.

"It's a relief to know that the governor has acted at last," said Davidson finally. "He's a weak man and he shilly-shallied. He said she was only here for a fortnight anyway, and if she went on to Apia that was under British jurisdiction and had nothing to do with him."

The missionary sprang to his feet and strode across the room.

"It's terrible the way the men who are in authority seek to evade their responsibility. They speak as though evil that was out of sight ceased to be evil. The very existence of that woman is a scandal and it does not help matters to shift it to another of the islands. In the end I had to speak straight from the shoulder."

Davidson's brow lowered, and he protruded his firm chin. He looked fierce and determined.

"What do you mean by that?"

"Our mission is not entirely without influence at Washington. I pointed out to the governor that it wouldn't do him any good if there was a complaint about the way he managed things here."

"When has she got to go?" asked the doctor, after a pause.

"The San Francisco boat is due here from Sydney next Tuesday. She's to sail on that."

That was in five days' time. It was next day, when he was coming back from the hospital where for want of something better to do Macphail spent most of his mornings, that the half-caste stopped him as he was going upstairs.

"Excuse me, Dr. Macphail, Miss Thompson's sick. Will you have a look at her."

"Certainly."

Horn led him to her room. She was sitting in a chair idly, neither reading nor sewing, staring in front of her. She wore her white dress and the large hat with the flowers on it. Macphail noticed that her skin was yellow and muddy under her powder, and her eyes were heavy.

"I'm sorry to hear you're not well," he said.

"Oh, I ain't sick really. I just said that, because I just had to see you. I've got to clear on a boat that's going to 'Frisco."

She looked at him and he saw that her eyes were suddenly startled. She opened and clenched her hands spasmodically. The trader stood at the door, listening.

"So I understand," said the doctor.

She gave a little gulp.

"I guess it ain't very convenient for me to go to 'Frisco just now. I went to see the governor yesterday afternoon, but I couldn't get to him. I saw the secretary, and he told me I'd got to take that boat and that was all there was to it. I just had to see the governor, so I waited outside his house this morning, and when he come out I spoke to him. He didn't want to speak to me, I'll say, but I wouldn't let him shake me off, and at last he said he hadn't no objection to my staying here till the next boat to Sydney if the Rev. Davidson will stand for it."

She stopped and looked at Dr. Macphail anxiously.

"I don't know exactly what I can do," he said.

"Well, I thought maybe you wouldn't mind asking him. I swear to God I won't start anything here if he'll just only let me stay. I won't go out of the house if that'll suit him. It's no more'n a fortnight."

"I'll ask him."

"He won't stand for it," said Horn. "He'll have you out on Tuesday, so you may as well make up your mind to it."

"Tell him I can get work in Sydney, straight stuff, I mean. 'Tain't asking very much."

"I'll do what I can."

"And come and tell me right away, will you? I can't set down to a thing till I get the dope one way or the other."

It was not an errand that much pleased the doctor, and, characteristically perhaps, he went about it indirectly. He told his wife what Miss Thompson had said to him and asked her to speak to Mrs Davidson. The missionary's attitude seemed rather arbitrary and it could do no harm if the girl were allowed to stay in Pago-Pago another fortnight. But he was not prepared for the result of his diplomacy. The missionary came to him straightway.

"Mrs. Davidson tells me that Thompson has been speaking to you."

Dr. Macphail, thus directly tackled, had the shy man's resentment at being forced out into the open. He felt his temper rising, and he flushed.

"I don't see that it can make any difference if she goes to Sydney rather than to San Francisco, and so long as she promises to behave while she's here it's dashed hard to persecute her."

The missionary fixed him with his stern eyes.

"Why is she unwilling to go back to San Francisco?"

"I didn't enquire," answered the doctor with some asperity. "And I think one does better to mind one's own business."

Perhaps it was not a very tactful answer.

"The governor has ordered her to be deported by the first boat that leaves the island. He's only done his duty and I will not interfere. Her presence is a peril here."

"I think you're very harsh and tyrannical."

The two ladies looked up at the doctor with some alarm, but they need not have feared a quarrel, for the missionary smiled gently.

"I'm terribly sorry you should think that of me, Dr. Macphail. Believe me, my heart bleeds for that unfortunate woman, but I'm only trying to do my duty."

The doctor made no answer. He looked out of the window sullenly. For once it was not raining and across the bay you saw nestling among the trees the huts of a native village.

"I think I'll take advantage of the rain stopping to go out," he said.

"Please don't bear me malice because I can't accede to your wish," said Davidson, with a melancholy smile. "I respect you very much, doctor, and I should be sorry if you thought ill of me."

"I have no doubt you have a sufficiently good opinion of yourself to bear mine with equanimity," he retorted.

"That's one on me," chuckled Davidson.

When Dr. Macphail, vexed with himself because he had been uncivil to no purpose, went downstairs, Miss Thompson was waiting for him with her door ajar.

"Well," she said, "have you spoken to him?"

"Yes, I'm sorry, he won't do anything," he answered, not looking at her in his embarrassment.

But then he gave her a quick glance, for a sob broke from her. He saw that her face was white with fear. It gave him a shock of dismay. And suddenly he had an idea.

"But don't give up hope yet. I think it's a shame the way they're treating you and I'm going to see the governor myself."

"Now?"

He nodded. Her face brightened.

"Say, that's real good of you. I'm sure he'll let me stay if you speak for me. I just won't do a thing I didn't ought all the time I'm here."

Dr. Macphail hardly knew why he had made up his mind to appeal to the governor. He was perfectly indifferent to Miss Thompson's affairs, but the missionary had irritated him, and with him temper was a smouldering thing. He found the governor at home. He was a large, handsome man, a sailor, with a grey toothbrush mustache; and he wore a spotless uniform of white drill.

"I've come to see you about a woman who's lodging in the same house as we are," he said. "Her name's Thompson."

"I guess I've heard nearly enough about her, Dr. Macphail," said the governor, smiling. "I've given her the order to get out next Tuesday and that's all I can do."

"I wanted to ask you if you couldn't stretch a point and let her stay here till the boat comes in from San Francisco so that she can go to Sydney. I will guarantee her good behaviour."

The governor continued to smile, but his eyes grew small and serious.

"I'd be very glad to oblige you, Dr. Macphail, but I've given the order and it must stand."

The doctor put the case as reasonably as he could, but now the governor ceased to smile at all. He listened sullenly, with averted gaze. Macphail saw that he was making no impression.

"I'm sorry to cause any lady inconvenience, but she'll have to sail on Tuesday and that's all there is to it."

"But what difference can it make?"

"Pardon me, doctor, but I don't feel called upon to explain my official actions except to the proper authorities."

Macphail looked at him shrewdly. He remembered Davidson's hint that he had used threats, and in the governor's attitude he read a singular embarrassment.

"Davidson's a damned busybody," he said hotly.

"Between ourselves, Dr. Macphail, I don't say that I have formed a very favorable opinion of Mr. Davidson, but I am bound to confess that he was within his rights in pointing out to me the danger that the presence of a woman of Miss Thompson's character was to a place like this where a number of enlisted men are stationed among a native population."

He got up and Dr. Macphail was obliged to do so too.

"I must ask you to excuse me. I have an engagement. Please give my respects to Mrs. Macphail."

The doctor left him crest-fallen. He knew that Miss Thompson would be waiting for him, and unwilling to tell her himself that he had failed, he went into the house by the back door and sneaked up the stairs as though he had something to hide.

At supper he was silent and ill-at-ease, but the missionary was jovial and animated. Dr. Macphail thought his eyes rested on him now and then with triumphant good-humour. It struck him suddenly that David-

son knew of his visit to the governor and of its ill success. But how on earth could he have heard of it? There was something sinister about the power of that man. After supper he saw Horn on the verandah and, as though to have a casual word with him, went out.

"She wants to know if you've seen the governor," the trader whispered.

"Yes. He wouldn't do anything. I'm awfully sorry, I can't do anything more."

"I knew he wouldn't. They daren't go against the missionaries."

"What are you talking about?" said Davidson affably, coming out to join them.

"I was just saying there was no chance of your getting over to Apia for at least another week," said the trader glibly.

He left them, and the two men returned into the parlour. Mr. Davidson devoted one hour after each meal to recreation. Presently a timid knock was heard at the door.

"Come in," said Mrs. Davidson, in her sharp voice.

The door was not opened. She got up and opened it. They saw Miss Thompson standing at the threshold. But the change in her appearance was extraordinary. This was no longer the flaunting hussy who had jeered at them in the road, but a broken, frightened woman. Her hair, as a rule so elaborately arranged, was tumbling untidily over her neck. She wore bedroom slippers and a skirt and blouse. They were unfresh and bedraggled. She stood at the door with the tears streaming down her face and did not dare to enter.

"What do you want?" said Mrs. Davidson harshly.

"May I speak to Mr. Davidson?" she said in a choking voice.

The missionary rose and went towards her.

"Come right in, Miss Thompson," he said in cordial tones. "What can I do for you?"

She entered the room.

"Say, I'm sorry for what I said to you the other day an' for — for everythin' else, I guess I was a bit lit up. I beg pardon."

"Oh, it was nothing. I guess my back's broad enough to bear a few hard words."

She stepped towards him with a movement that was horribly cringing.

"You've got me beat. I'm all in. You won't make me go back to 'Frisco?"

His genial manner vanished and his voice grew on a sudden hard and stern.

"Why don't you want to go back there?"

She cowered before him.

"I guess my people live there. I don't want them to see me like this. I'll go anywhere else you say."

"Why don't you want to go back to San Francisco?"

"I've told you."

He leaned forward, staring at her, and his great, shining eyes seemed to try to bore into her soul. He gave a sudden gasp.

"The penitentiary."

She screamed, and then she fell at his feet, clasping his legs.

"Don't send me back there. I swear to you before God I'll be a good woman. I'll give all this up."

She burst into a torrent of confused supplication and the tears coursed down her painted cheeks. He leaned over her and, lifting her face, forced her to look at him.

"Is that it, the penitentiary?"

"I beat it before they could get me," she gasped. "If the bulls grab me it's three years for mine."

He let go his hold of her and she fell in a heap on the floor, sobbing bitterly. Dr. Macphail stood up.

"This alters the whole thing," he said. "You can't make her go back when you know this. Give her another chance. She wants to turn over a new leaf."

"I'm going to give her the finest chance she's ever had. If she repents let her accept her punishment."

She misunderstood the words and looked up. There was a gleam of hope in her heavy eyes.

"You'll let me go?"

"No. You shall sail for San Francisco on Tuesday."

She gave a groan of horror and then burst into low, hoarse shrieks which sounded hardly human, and she beat her head passionately on the ground. Dr. Macphail sprang to her and lifted her up.

"Come on, you mustn't do that. You'd better go to your room and lie down. I'll get you something."

He raised her to her feet and partly dragging her, partly carrying her, got her downstairs. He was furious with Mrs. Davidson and with his wife because they made no effort to help. The half-caste was standing on the landing and with his assistance he managed to get her on the bed. She was moaning and crying. She was almost insensible. He gave her a hypodermic injection. He was hot and exhausted when he went upstairs again.

"I've got her to lie down."

The two women and Davidson were in the same positions as when he had left them. They could not have moved or spoken since he went.

"I was waiting for you," said Davidson, in a strange, distant voice. "I want you all to pray with me for the soul of our erring sister."

He took the Bible off a shelf, and sat down at the table at which they had supped. It had not been cleared, and he pushed the tea-pot out of the way. In a powerful voice, resonant and deep, he read to them the

chapter in which is narrated the meeting of Jesus Christ with the woman taken in adultery. Then he closed the book and went down on his knees.

"Now kneel with me and let us pray for the soul of our dear sister, Sadie Thompson."

He burst into a long, passionate prayer in which he implored God to have mercy on the sinful woman. Mrs. Macphail and Mrs. Davidson knelt with covered eyes. The doctor, taken by surprise, awkward and sheepish, knelt too. The missionary's prayer had a savage eloquence. He was extraordinarily moved, and as he spoke the tears ran down his cheeks. Outside, the pitiless rain fell, fell steadily, with a fierce malignity that was all too human.

At last he stopped. He paused for a moment and said:

"We will now repeat the Lord's prayer."

They said it and then, following him, they rose from their knees. Mrs. Davidson's face was pale and restful. She was comforted and at peace, but the Macphails felt suddenly bashful. They did not know which way to look.

"I'll just go down and see how she is now," said Dr. Macphail.

When he knocked at her door it was opened for him by Horn. Miss Thompson was in a rocking-chair, sobbing quietly.

"What are you doing there?" exclaimed Macphail. "I told you to lie down."

"I can't lie down. I want to see Mr. Davidson."

"My poor child, what do you think is the good of it? You'll never move him."

"He said he'd come if I sent for him."

Macphail motioned to the trader.

"Go and fetch him."

He waited with her in silence while the trader went upstairs. Davidson came in.

"Excuse me for asking you to come here," she said, looking at him sombrely.

"I was expecting you to send for me. I knew the Lord would answer my prayer."

They stared at one another for a moment and then she looked away. She kept her eyes averted when she spoke.

"I've been a bad woman. I want to repent."

"Thank God! thank God! He has heard our prayers."

He turned to the two men.

"Leave me alone with her. Tell Mrs. Davidson that our prayers have been answered."

They went out and closed the door behind them.

"Gee whizz," said the trader.

That night Dr. Macphail could not get to sleep till late, and when he

heard the missionary come upstairs he looked at his watch. It was two o'clock. But even then he did not go to bed at once, for through the wooden partition that separated their rooms he heard him praying aloud, till he himself, exhausted, fell asleep.

When he saw him next morning he was surprised at his appearance. He was paler than ever, tired, but his eyes shone with an inhuman fire. It looked as though he were filled with an overwhelming joy.

"I want you to go down presently and see Sadie," he said, "I can't hope that her body is better, but her soul — her soul is transformed."

The doctor was feeling wan and nervous.

"You were with her very late last night," he said.

"Yes, she couldn't bear to have me leave her."

"You look as pleased as Punch," the doctor said irritably.

Davidson's eyes shone with ecstasy.

"A great mercy has been vouchsafed me. Last night I was privileged to bring a lost soul to the loving arms of Jesus."

Miss Thompson was again in the rocking-chair. The bed had not been made. The room was in disorder. She had not troubled to dress herself, but wore a dirty dressing-gown, and her hair was tied in a sluttish knot. She had given her face a dab with a wet towel, but it was all swollen and creased with crying. She looked a drab.

She raised her eyes dully when the doctor came in. She was cowed and broken.

"Where's Mr. Davidson?" she asked.

"He'll come presently if you want him," answered Macphail acidly. "I came here to see how you were."

"Oh, I guess I'm O. K. You needn't worry about that."

"Have you had anything to eat?"

"Horn brought me some coffee."

She looked anxiously at the door.

"D'you think he'll come down soon? I feel as if it wasn't so terrible when he's with me."

"Are you still going on Tuesday?"

"Yes, he says I've got to go. Please tell him to come right along. You can't do me any good. He's the only one as can help me now."

"Very well," said Dr. Macphail.

During the next three days the missionary spent almost all his time with Sadie Thompson. He joined the others only to have his meals. Dr. Macphail noticed that he hardly ate.

"He's wearing himself out," said Mrs. Davidson pitifully. "He'll have a breakdown if he doesn't take care, but he won't spare himself."

She herself was white and pale. She told Mrs. Macphail that she had no sleep. When the missionary came upstairs from Miss Thompson he prayed till he was exhausted, but even then he did not sleep for long.

After an hour or two he got up and dressed himself, and went for a tramp along the bay. He had strange dreams.

"This morning he told me that he'd been dreaming about the mountains of Nebraska," said Mrs. Davidson.

"That's curious," said Dr. Macphail.

He remembered seeing them from the windows of the train when he crossed America. They were like huge mole-hills, rounded and smooth, and they rose from the plain abruptly. Dr. Macphail remembered how it struck him that they were like a woman's breasts.

Davidson's restlessness was intolerable even to himself. But he was buoyed up by a wonderful exhilaration. He was tearing out by the roots the last vestiges of sin that lurked in the hidden corners of that poor woman's heart. He read with her and prayed with her.

"It's wonderful," he said to them one day at supper. "It's a true rebirth. Her soul, which was black as night, is now pure and white like the new-fallen snow. I am humble and afraid. Her remorse for all her sins is beautiful. I am not worthy to touch the hem of her garment."

"Have you the heart to send her back to San Francisco?" said the doctor. "Three years in an American prison. I should have thought you might have saved her from that."

"Ah, but don't you see? It's necessary. Do you think my heart doesn't bleed for her? I love her as I love my wife and my sister. All the time that she is in prison I shall suffer all the pain that she suffers."

"Bunkum," cried the doctor impatiently.

"You don't understand because you're blind. She's sinned, and she must suffer. I know what she'll endure. She'll be starved and tortured and humiliated. I want her to accept the punishment of man as a sacrifice to God. I want her to accept it joyfully. She has an opportunity which is offered to very few of us. God is very good and very merciful."

Davidson's voice trembled with excitement. He could hardly articulate the words that tumbled passionately from his lips.

"All day I pray with her and when I leave her I pray again, I pray with all my might and main, so that Jesus may grant her this great mercy. I want to put in her heart the passionate desire to be punished so that at the end, even if I offered to let her go, she would refuse. I want her to feel that the bitter punishment of prison is the thank-offering that she places at the feet of our Blessed Lord, who gave his life for her."

The days passed slowly. The whole household, intent on the wretched, tortured woman downstairs, lived in a state of unnatural excitement. She was like a victim that was being prepared for the savage rites of a bloody idolatry. Her terror numbed her. She could not bear to let Davidson out of her sight; it was only when he was with her that she had courage, and she hung upon him with a slavish dependence. She cried a great deal, and she read the Bible, and prayed. Sometimes she was ex-

hausted and apathetic. Then she did indeed look forward to her ordeal, for it seemed to offer an escape, direct and concrete, from the anguish she was enduring. She could not bear much longer the vague terrors which now assailed her. With her sins she had put aside all personal vanity, and she slopped about her room, unkempt and dishevelled, in her tawdry dressing-gown. She had not taken off her night-dress for four days, nor put on stockings. Her room was littered and untidy. Meanwhile the rain fell with a cruel persistence. You felt that the heavens must at last be empty of water, but still it poured down, straight and heavy, with a maddening iteration, on the iron roof. Everything was damp and clammy. There was mildew on the walls and on the boots that stood on the floor. Through the sleepless nights the mosquitoes droned their angry chant.

"If it would only stop raining for a single day it wouldn't be so bad," said Dr. Macphail.

They all looked forward to the Tuesday when the boat for San Francisco was to arrive from Sydney. The strain was intolerable. So far as Dr. Macphail was concerned, his pity and his resentment were alike extinguished by his desire to be rid of the unfortunate woman. The inevitable must be accepted. He felt he would breathe more freely when the ship had sailed. Sadie Thompson was to be escorted on board by a clerk in the governor's office. This person called on the Monday evening and told Miss Thompson to be prepared at eleven in the morning. Davidson was with her.

"I'll see that everything is ready. I mean to come on board with her myself."

Miss Thompson did not speak.

When Dr. Macphail blew out his candle and crawled cautiously under his mosquito curtains, he gave a sigh of relief.

"Well, thank God that's over. By this time to-morrow she'll be gone."

"Mrs. Davidson will be glad too. She says he's wearing himself to a shadow," said Mrs. Macphail. "She's a different woman."

"Who?"

"Sadie. I should never have thought it possible. It makes one humble."

Dr. Macphail did not answer, and presently he fell asleep. He was tired out, and he slept more soundly than usual.

He was awakened in the morning by a hand placed on his arm, and, starting up, saw Horn by the side of his bed. The trader put his finger on his mouth to prevent any exclamation from Dr. Macphail and beckoned to him to come. As a rule he wore shabby ducks, but now he was barefoot and wore only the *lava-lava* of the natives. He looked suddenly savage, and Dr. Macphail, getting out of bed, saw that he was heavily tattooed. Horn made him a sign to come on to the verandah. Dr. Macphail got out of bed and followed the trader out.

"Don't make a noise," he whispered. "You're wanted. Put on a coat and some shoes. Quick."

Dr. Macphail's first thought was that something had happened to Miss Thompson.

"What is it? Shall I bring my instruments?"

"Hurry, please, hurry."

Dr. Macphail crept back into the bedroom, put on a waterproof over his pyjamas, and a pair of rubber-soled shoes. He rejoined the trader, and together they tiptoed down the stairs. The door leading out to the road was open and at it were standing half a dozen natives.

"What is it?" repeated the doctor.

"Come along with me," said Horn.

He walked out and the doctor followed him. The natives came after them in a little bunch. They crossed the road and came on to the beach. The doctor saw a group of natives standing round some object at the water's edge. They hurried along, a couple of dozen yards perhaps, and the natives opened out as the doctor came up. The trader pushed him forwards. Then he saw, lying half in the water and half out, a dreadful object, the body of Davidson. Dr. Macphail bent down — he was not a man to lose his head in an emergency — and turned the body over. The throat was cut from ear to ear, and in the right hand was still the razor with which the deed was done.

"He's quite cold," said the doctor. "He must have been dead some time."

"One of the boys saw him lying there on his way to work just now and came and told me. Do you think he did it himself?"

"Yes. Someone ought to go for the police."

Horn said something in the native tongue, and two youths started off.

"We must leave him here till they come," said the doctor.

"They mustn't take him into my house. I won't have him in my house."

"You'll do what the authorities say," replied the doctor sharply. "In point of fact I expect they'll take him to the mortuary."

They stood waiting where they were. The trader took a cigarette from a fold in his *lava-lava* and gave one to Dr. Macphail. They smoked while they stared at the corpse. Dr. Macphail could not understand.

"Why do you think he did it?" asked Horn.

The doctor shrugged his shoulders. In a little while native police came along, under the charge of a marine, with a stretcher, and immediately afterwards a couple of naval officers and a naval doctor. They managed everything in a businesslike manner.

"What about the wife?" said one of the officers.

"Now that you've come I'll go back to the house and get some things on. I'll see that it's broken to her. She'd better not see him till he's been fixed up a little."

"I guess that's right," said the naval doctor.

When Dr. Macphail went back he found his wife nearly dressed.

"Mrs. Davidson's in a dreadful state about her husband," she said to him as soon as he appeared. "He hasn't been to bed all night. She heard him leave Miss Thompson's room at two, but he went out. If he's been walking about since then he'll be absolutely dead."

Dr. Macphail told her what had happened and asked her to break the news to Mrs. Davidson.

"But why did he do it?" she asked, horror-stricken.

"I don't know."

"But I can't. I can't."

"You must."

She gave him a frightened look and went out. He heard her go into Mrs. Davidson's room. He waited a minute to gather himself together and then began to shave and wash. When he was dressed he sat down on the bed and waited for his wife. At last she came.

"She wants to see him," she said.

"They've taken him to the mortuary. We'd better go down with her. How did she take it?"

"I think she's stunned. She didn't cry. But she's trembling like a leaf."

"We'd better go at once."

When they knocked at her door Mrs. Davidson came out. She was very pale, but dry-eyed. To the doctor she seemed unnaturally composed. No word was exchanged, and they set out in silence down the road. When they arrived at the mortuary Mrs. Davidson spoke.

"Let me go in and see him alone."

They stood aside. A native opened a door for her and closed it behind her. They sat down and waited. One or two white men came and talked to them in undertones. Dr. Macphail told them again what he knew of the tragedy. At last the door was quietly opened and Mrs. Davidson came out. Silence fell upon them.

"I'm ready to go back now," she said.

Her voice was hard and steady. Dr. Macphail could not understand the look in her eyes. Her pale face was very stern. They walked back slowly, never saying a word, and at last they came round the bend on the other side of which stood their house. Mrs. Davidson gave a gasp, and for a moment they stopped still. An incredible sound assaulted their ears. The gramophone which had been silent for so long was playing, playing ragtime loud and harsh.

"What's that?" cried Mrs. Macphail with horror.

"Let's go on," said Mrs. Davidson.

They walked up the steps and entered the hall. Miss Thompson was standing at her door, chatting with a sailor. A sudden change had taken place in her. She was no longer the cowed drudge of the last days. She was dressed in all her finery, in her white dress, with the high shiny boots

over which her fat legs bulged in their cotton stockings; her hair was elaborately arranged; and she wore that enormous hat covered with gaudy flowers. Her face was painted, her eyebrows were boldly black, and her lips were scarlet. She held herself erect. She was the flaunting quean that they had known at first. As they came in she broke into a loud, jeering laugh; and then, when Mrs. Davidson involuntarily stopped, she collected the spittle in her mouth and spat. Mrs. Davidson cowered back, and two red spots rose suddenly to her cheeks. Then, covering her face with her hands, she broke away and ran quickly up the stairs. Dr. Macphail was outraged. He pushed past the woman into her room.

"What the devil are you doing?" he cried. "Stop that damned machine."

He went up to it and tore the record off. She turned on him.

"Say, doc, you can that stuff with me. What the hell are you doin' in my room?"

"What do you mean?" he cried. "What d'you mean?"

She gathered herself together. No one could describe the scorn of her expression or the contemptuous hatred she put into her answer.

"You men! You filthy, dirty pigs! You're all the same, all of you. Pigs! Pigs!"

Dr. Macphail gasped. He understood.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

(1867–)

JOHN GALSWORTHY was born at Coombe, Surrey, in 1867. He was educated first at Harrow, and later at Oxford. He graduated in 1889, and the next year he was called to the bar. At law he "practised almost not at all," and left London in order to travel. In 1899 he published his first novel, *Jocelyn*. As novelist, essayist, dramatist, and writer of short stories he has occupied an important position in contemporary English letters.

Few of Galsworthy's stories are of finer texture than *The Apple-Tree*, a short novel of extraordinary charm. It first appeared in *Five Tales*. It is here reprinted from that volume and from the collected stories in *Caravan*, copyright, 1918, by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, and by William Heinemann, Ltd., London, 1918, by permission of the publishers.

THE APPLE-TREE

"The Apple-tree, the singing, and the gold."
MURRAY'S *Hippolytus of Euripides*

ON THEIR silver-wedding day Ashurst and his wife were motoring along the outskirts of the moor, intending to crown the festival by stopping the night at Torquay, where they had first met. This was the idea of Stella Ashurst, whose character contained a streak of sentiment. If she had long lost the blue-eyed, flower-like charm, the cool slim purity of face and form, the apple-blossom colouring, which had so swiftly and so oddly affected Ashurst twenty-six years ago, she was still at forty-three a comely and faithful companion, whose cheeks were faintly mottled, and whose grey-blue eyes had acquired a certain fullness.

It was she who had stopped the car where the common rose steeply to the left, and a narrow strip of larch and beech, with here and there a pine, stretched out towards the valley between the road and the first long high hill of the full moor. She was looking for a place where they might lunch, for Ashurst never looked for anything; and this, between the golden furze and the feathery green larches smelling of lemons in the last sun of April — this, with a view into the deep valley and up to the long moor heights, seemed fitting to the decisive nature of one who sketched in water-colours, and loved romantic spots. Grasping her paint box, she got out.

"Won't this do, Frank?"

Ashurst, rather like a bearded Schiller, grey in the wings, tall, long-leg-

ged, with large remote grey eyes which sometimes filled with meaning and became almost beautiful, with nose a little to one side, and bearded lips just open — Ashurst, forty-eight, and silent, grasped the luncheon basket, and got out too.

"Oh! Look, Frank! A grave!"

By the side of the road, where the track from the top of the common crossed it at right angles and ran through a gate past the narrow wood, was a thin mound of turf, six feet by one, with a moorstone to the west, and on it someone had thrown a blackthorn spray and a handful of bluebells. Ashurst looked, and the poet in him moved. At cross-roads — a suicide's grave! Poor mortals with their superstitions! Whoever lay there, though, had the best of it, no clammy sepulchre among other hideous graves carved with futilities — just a rough stone, the wide sky, and wayside blessings! And, without comment, for he had learned not to be a philosopher in the bosom of his family, he strode away up on to the common, dropped the luncheon basket under a wall, spread a rug for his wife to sit on — she would turn up from her sketching when she was hungry — and took from his pocket Murray's translation of the "Hippolytus." He had soon finished reading of "The Cyprian" and her revenge, and looked at the sky instead. And watching the white clouds so bright against the intense blue, Ashurst, on his silver-wedding day, longed for — he knew not what. Mal-adjusted to life — man's organism! One's mode of life might be high and scrupulous, but there was always an undercurrent of greediness, a hankering, and sense of waste. Did women have it too? Who could tell? And yet, men who gave vent to their appetites for novelty, their riotous longings for new adventures, new risks, new pleasures, these suffered, no doubt, from the reverse side of starvation, from surfeit. No getting out of it — a mal-adjusted animal, civilised man! There could be no garden of his choosing, of "the Apple-tree, the singing, and the gold," in the words of that lovely Greek chorus, no achievable elysium in life, or lasting haven of happiness for any man with a sense of beauty — nothing which could compare with the captured loveliness in a work of art, set down for ever, so that to look on it or read was always to have the same precious sense of exaltation and restful inebriety. Life no doubt had moments with that quality of beauty, of unbidden flying rapture, but the trouble was, they lasted no longer than the span of a cloud's flight over the sun; impossible to keep them with you, as Art caught beauty and held it fast. They were fleeting as one of the glimmering or golden visions one had of the soul in nature, glimpses of its remote and brooding spirit. Here, with the sun hot on his face, a cuckoo calling from a thorn tree, and in the air the honey savour of gorse — here among the little fronds of the young fern, the starry blackthorn, while the bright clouds drifted by high above the hills and dreamy valleys — here and now was such a glimpse. But in a moment it would

pass — as the face of Pan, which looks round the corner of a rock, vanishes at your stare. And suddenly he sat up. Surely there was something familiar about this view, this bit of common, that ribbon of road, the old wall behind him. While they were driving he had not been taking notice — never did; thinking of far things or of nothing — but now he saw! Twenty-six years ago, just at this time of year, from the farmhouse within half a mile of this very spot he had started for that day in Torquay whence it might be said he had never returned. And a sudden ache beset his heart; he had stumbled on just one of those past moments in his life, whose beauty and rapture he had failed to arrest, whose wings had fluttered away into the unknown; he had stumbled on a buried memory, a wild sweet time, swiftly choked and ended. And, turning on his face, he rested his chin on his hands, and stared at the short grass where the little blue milkwort was growing. . . .

And this is what he remembered.

I

On the first of May, after their last year together at college, Frank Ashurst and his friend Robert Garton were on a tramp. They had walked that day from Brent, intending to make Chagford, but Ashurst's football knee had given out, and according to their map they had still some seven miles to go. They were sitting on a bank beside the road, where a track crossed alongside a wood, resting the knee and talking of the universe, as young men will. Both were over six feet, and thin as rails; Ashurst pale, idealistic, full of absence; Garton queer, round-the-corner, knotted, curly, like some primeval beast. Both had a literary bent; neither wore a hat. Ashurst's hair was smooth, pale, wavy, and had a way of rising on either side of his brow, as if always being flung back; Garton's was a kind of dark unfathomed mop. They had not met a soul for miles.

"My dear fellow," Garton was saying, "pity's only an effect of self-consciousness; it's a disease of the last five thousand years. The world was happier without."

Ashurst, following the clouds with his eyes, answered:

"It's the pearl in the oyster, anyway."

"My dear chap, all our modern unhappiness comes from pity. Look at animals, and Red Indians, limited to feeling their own occasional misfortunes; then look at ourselves — never free from feeling the toothaches of others. Let's get back to feeling for nobody, and have a better time."

"You'll never practise that."

Garton pensively stirred the hotch-potch of his hair.

"To attain full growth, one mustn't be squeamish. To starve oneself emotionally's a mistake. All emotion is to the good — enriches life."

"Yes, and when it runs up against chivalry?"

"Ah! That's so English! If you speak of emotion the English always think you want something physical, and are shocked. They're afraid of passion, but not of lust — oh, no! — so long as they can keep it secret."

Ashurst did not answer; he had plucked a blue floweret, and was twiddling it against the sky. A cuckoo began calling from a thorn tree. The sky, the flowers, the songs of birds! Robert was talking through his hat! And he said:

"Well, let's go on, and find some farm where we can put up." In uttering those words, he was conscious of a girl coming down from the common just above them. She was outlined against the sky, carrying a basket, and you could see that sky through the crook of her arm. And Ashurst, who saw beauty without wondering how it could advantage him, thought: 'How pretty!' The wind, blowing her dark frieze skirt against her legs, lifted her battered peacock tam-o'-shanter; her greyish blouse was worn and old, her shoes were split, her little hands rough and red, her neck browned. Her dark hair waved untidy across her broad forehead, her face was short, her upper lip short, showing a glint of teeth, her brows were straight and dark, her lashes long and dark, her nose straight; but her grey eyes were the wonder — dewy as if opened for the first time that day. She looked at Ashurst — perhaps he struck her as strange, limping along without a hat, with his large eyes on her, and his hair flung back. He could not take off what was not on his head, but put up his hand in a salute, and said:

"Can you tell us if there's a farm near here where we could stay the night? I've gone lame."

"There's only our farm near, sir." She spoke without shyness, in a pretty, soft, crisp voice.

"And where is that?"

"Down here, sir."

"Would you put us up?"

"Oh! I think we would."

"Will you show us the way?"

"Yes, sir."

He limped on, silent, and Garton took up the catechism.

"Are you a Devonshire girl?"

"No, sir."

"What then?"

"From Wales."

"Ah! I *thought* you were a Celt; so it's not your farm?"

"My aunt's, sir."

"And your uncle's?"

"He is dead."

"Who farms it, then?"

"My aunt, and my three cousins."

"But your uncle was a Devonshire man?"
"Yes, sir."
"Have you lived here long?"
"Seven years."
"And how d'you like it after Wales?"
"I don't know, sir."
"I suppose you don't remember?"
"Oh, yes! But it is different."
"I believe you!"
Ashurst broke in suddenly:
"How old are you?"
"Seventeen, sir."
"And what's your name?"
"Megan David."
"This is Robert Garton, and I am Frank Ashurst. We wanted to get on to Chagford."
"It is a pity your leg is hurting you."
Ashurst smiled, and when he smiled his face was rather beautiful.

Descending past the narrow wood, they came on the farm suddenly — a long, low, stone-built dwelling with casement windows, in a farmyard where pigs and fowls and an old mare were straying. A short steep-up grass hill behind was crowned with a few Scotch firs, and in front, an old orchard of apple-trees, just breaking into flower, stretched down to a stream and a long wild meadow. A little boy with oblique dark eyes was shepherding a pig, and by the house door stood a woman, who came towards them. The girl said:

"It is Mrs. Narracombe, my aunt."

"Mrs. Narracombe, my aunt," had a quick, dark eye, like a mother wild-duck's, and something of the same snaky turn about her neck.

"We met your niece on the road," said Ashurst; "she thought you might perhaps put us up for the night."

Mrs. Narracombe, taking them in from head to heel, answered:

"Well, I can, if you don't mind one room. Megan, get the spare room ready, and a bowl of cream. You'll be wanting tea, I suppose."

Passing through a sort of porch made by two yew trees and some flowering-currant bushes, the girl disappeared into the house, her peacock tam-o'-shanter bright athwart that rosy-pink and the dark green of the yews.

"Will you come into the parlour and rest your leg? You'll be from college, perhaps?"

"We were, but we've gone down now."

Mrs. Narracombe nodded sagely.

The parlour, brick-floored, with bare table and shiny chairs and sofa stuffed with horsehair, seemed never to have been used, it was so terribly

clean. Ashurst sat down at once on the sofa, holding his lame knee between his hands, and Mrs. Narracombe gazed at him. He was the only son of a late professor of chemistry, but people found a certain lordliness in one who was often so sublimely unconscious of them.

"Is there a stream where we could bathe?"

"There's the strame at the bottom of the orchard, but sittin' down you'll not be covered!"

"How deep?"

"Well, 'tis about a foot and a half, maybe."

"Oh! That'll do fine. Which way?"

"Down the lane, through the second gate on the right, an' the pool's by the big apple tree that stands by itself. There's trout there, if you can tickle them."

"They're more likely to tickle us!"

Mrs. Narracombe smiled. "There'll be the tea ready when you come back."

The pool, formed by the damming of a rock, had a sandy bottom; and the big apple tree, lowest in the orchard, grew so close that its boughs almost overhung the water; it was in leaf, and all but in flower — its crimson buds just bursting. There was not room for more than one at a time in that narrow bath, and Ashurst waited his turn, rubbing his knee and gazing at the wild meadow, all rocks and thorn trees and field flowers, with a grove of beeches beyond, raised up on a flat mound. Every bough was swinging in the wind, every spring bird calling, and a slanting sunlight dappled the grass. He thought of Theocritus, and the river Cherwell, of the moon, and the maiden with the dewy eyes; of so many things that he seemed to think of nothing; and he felt absurdly happy.

2

During a late and sumptuous tea with eggs to it, cream and jam, and thin, fresh cakes touched with saffron, Garton descanted on the Celts. It was about the period of the Celtic awakening, and the discovery that there was Celtic blood about this family had excited one who believed that he was a Celt himself. Sprawling on a horsehair chair, with a hand-made cigarette dribbling from the corner of his curly lips, he had been plunging his cold pin-points of eyes into Ashurst's and praising the refinement of the Welsh. To come out of Wales into England was like the change from china to earthenware! Frank, as a d —— d Englishman, had not of course perceived the exquisite refinement and emotional capacity of that Welsh girl! And, delicately stirring in the dark mat of his still wet hair, he explained how exactly she illustrated the writings of the Welsh bard Morgan-ap-Something in the twelfth century.

Ashurst, full length on the horsehair sofa, and jutting far beyond its

end, smoked a deeply-coloured pipe, and did not listen, thinking of the girl's face when she brought in a relay of cakes. It had been exactly like looking at a flower, or some other pretty sight in Nature — till, with a funny little shiver, she had lowered her glance and gone out, quiet as a mouse.

"Let's go to the kitchen," said Garton, "and see some more of her."

The kitchen was a white-washed room with rafters, to which were attached smoked hams; there were flower-pots on the window-sill, and guns hanging on nails, queer mugs, china and pewter, and portraits of Queen Victoria. A long, narrow table of plain wood was set with bowls and spoons, under a string of high-hung onions; two sheep-dogs and three cats lay here and there. On one side of the recessed fireplace sat two small boys, idle, and good as gold; on the other sat a stout, light-eyed, red-faced youth with hair and lashes the colour of the tow he was running through the barrel of a gun; between them Mrs. Narracombe dreamily stirred some savoury-scented stew in a large pot. Two other youths, oblique-eyed, dark-haired, rather sly-faced, like the two little boys, were talking together and lolling against the wall; and a short, elderly, clean-shaven man in corduroys, seated in the window, was conning a battered journal. The girl Megan seemed the only active creature — drawing cider and passing with the jugs from cask to table. Seeing them thus about to eat, Garton said:

"Ah! If you'll let us, we'll come back when supper's over," and without waiting for an answer they withdrew again to the parlour. But the colour in the kitchen, the warmth, the scents, and all those faces, heightened the bleakness of their shiny room, and they resumed their seats moodily.

"Regular gipsy type, those boys. There was only one Saxon — the fellow cleaning the gun. That girl is a very subtle study psychologically."

Ashurst's lips twitched. Garton seemed to him an ass just then. Subtle study! She was a wild flower. A creature it did you good to look at. Study!

Garton went on:

"Emotionally she would be wonderful. She wants awakening."

"Are you going to awaken her?"

Garton looked at him and smiled. 'How coarse and English you are!' that curly smile seemed saying.

And Ashurst puffed his pipe. Awaken her! This fool had the best opinion of himself! He threw up the window and leaned out. Dusk had gathered thick. The farm buildings and the wheel-house were all dim and bluish, the apple trees but a blurred wilderness; the air smelled of wood smoke from the kitchen fire. One bird going to bed later than the others was uttering a half-hearted twitter, as though surprised at the darkness. From the stable came the snuffle and stamp of a feeding horse. And away over there was the loom of the moor, and away and away the shy stars

which had not as yet full light, pricking white through the deep blue heavens. A quavering owl hooted. Ashurst drew a deep breath. What a night to wander out in! A padding of unshod hoofs came up the lane, and three dim, dark shapes passed — ponies on an evening march. Their heads, black and fuzzy, showed above the gate. At the tap of his pipe, and a shower of little sparks, they shied round and scampered. A bat went fluttering past, uttering its almost inaudible "chip, chip." Ashurst held out his hand; on the upturned palm he could feel the dew. Suddenly from overhead he heard little burring boys' voices, little thumps of boots thrown down, and another voice, crisp and soft — the girl's putting them to bed, no doubt; and nine clear words: "No, Rick, you can't have the cat in bed"; then came a skirmish of giggles and gurgles, a soft slap, a laugh so low and pretty that it made him shiver a little. A blowing sound, and the glim of the candle which was fingering the dusk above, went out; silence reigned. Ashurst withdrew into the room and sat down; his knee pained him, and his soul felt gloomy.

"You go to the kitchen," he said; "I'm going to bed."

3

For Ashurst the wheel of slumber was wont to turn noiseless and slick and swift, but though he seemed sunk in sleep when his companion came up, he was really wide awake; and long after Garton, smothered in the other bed of that low-roofed room, was worshipping darkness with his upturned nose, he heard the owls. Barring the discomfort of his knee, it was not unpleasant — the cares of life did not loom large in night watches for this young man. In fact he had none; just enrolled a barrister, with literary aspirations, the world before him, no father or mother, and four hundred a year of his own. Did it matter where he went, what he did, or when he did it? His bed, too, was hard, and this preserved him from fever. He lay, sniffing the scent of the night which drifted into the low room through the open casement close to his head. Except for a definite irritation with his friend, natural when you have tramped with a man for three days, Ashurst's memories and visions that sleepless night were kindly and wistful and exciting. One vision, specially clear and unreasonable, for he had not even been conscious of noting it, was the face of the youth cleaning the gun; intent, stolid, yet startled uplook at the kitchen doorway, quickly shifted to the girl carrying the cider jug. This red, blue-eyed, light-lashed, tow-haired face stuck as firmly in his memory as the girl's own face, so dewy and simple. But at last, in the square of darkness through the uncurtained casement, he saw day coming, and heard one hoarse and sleepy caw. Then followed silence, dead as ever, till the song of a blackbird, not properly awake, adventured into the hush. And, from staring at the framed brightening light, Ashurst fell asleep.

Next day his knee was badly swollen; the walking tour was obviously over. Garton, due back in London on the morrow, departed at midday with an ironical smile left a scar of irritation — healed the moment his loping figure vanished round the corner of the steep lane. All day Ashurst rested his knee, in a green-painted wooden chair on the patch of grass by the yew-tree porch, where the sunlight distilled the scent of stocks and gillyflowers, and a ghost of scent from the flowering-currant bushes. Beatifically he smoked, dreamed, watched.

A farm in spring is all birth — young things coming out of bud and shell, and human beings watching over the process with faint excitement feeding and tending what has been born. So still the young man sat, that a mother-goose, with stately cross-footed waddle, brought her six yellow necked grey-backed goslings to strop their little beaks against the grass blades at his feet. Now and again Mrs. Narracombe or the girl Megan would come and ask if he wanted anything, and he would smile and say: "Nothing, thanks. It's splendid here." Towards tea-time they came out together, bearing a long poultice of some dark stuff in a bowl, and after a long and solemn scrutiny of his swollen knee, bound it on. When they were gone, he thought of the girl's soft "Oh!" — of her pitying eyes, and the little wrinkle in her brow. And again he felt that unreasoning irritation against his departed friend, who talked such rot about her. When she brought out his tea, he said:

"How did you like my friend, Megan?"

She forced down her upper lip, as if afraid that to smile was not polite. "He was a funny gentleman; he made us laugh. I think he is very clever."

"What did he say to make you laugh?"

"He said I was a daughter of the bards. What are they?"

"Welsh poets, who lived hundreds of years ago."

"Why am I their daughter, please?"

"He meant that you were the sort of girl they sang about."

She wrinkled her brows. "I think he likes to joke. Am I?"

"Would you believe me, if I told you?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well, I think he was right."

She smiled.

And Ashurst thought: 'You *are* a pretty thing!'

"He said, too, that Joe was a Saxon type. What would that be?"

"Which is Joe? With the blue eyes and red face?"

"Yes. My uncle's nephew."

"Not your cousin, then?"

"No."

"Well, he meant that Joe was like the men who came over to England about fourteen hundred years ago, and conquered it."

"Oh! I know about them; but is he?"

"Garton's crazy about that sort of thing; but I must say Joe does look a bit Early Saxon."

"Yes."

That "Yes" tickled Ashurst. It was so crisp and graceful, so conclusive, and politely aquiescent in what was evidently Greek to her.

"He said that all the other boys were regular gipsies. He should not have said that. My aunt laughed, but she didn't like it, of course, and my cousins were angry. Uncle was a farmer — farmers are not gipsies. It is wrong to hurt people."

Ashurst wanted to take her hand and give it a squeeze, but he only answered:

"Quite right, Megan. By the way, I heard you putting the little ones to bed last night."

She flushed a little. "Please to drink your tea — it is getting cold. Shall I get you some fresh?"

"Do you ever have time to do anything for yourself?"

"Oh, yes."

"I've been watching, but I haven't seen it yet."

She wrinkled her brows in a puzzled frown, and her colour deepened.

When she was gone, Ashurst thought: 'Did she think I was chaffing her? I wouldn't for the world!' He was at that age when to some men "Beauty's a flower," as the poet says, and inspires in them the thoughts of chivalry. Never very conscious of his surroundings, it was some time before he was aware that the youth whom Garton had called "a Saxon type" was standing outside the stable door; and a fine bit of colour he made in his soiled brown velvetcords, muddy gaiters, and blue shirt; red-armed, red-faced, the sun turning his hair from tow to flax; immovably stolid, persistent, unsmiling he stood. Then, seeing Ashurst looking at him, he crossed the yard at that gait of the young countryman always ashamed not to be slow and heavy-dwelling on each leg, and disappeared round the end of the house towards the kitchen entrance. A chill came over Ashurst's mood. Clods! With all the good will in the world, how impossible to get on terms with them! And yet — see that girl! Her shoes were split, her hands rough; but — what was it? Was it really her Celtic blood, as Garton had said? — she was a lady born, a jewel, though probably she could do no more than just read and write!

The elderly, clean-shaven man he had seen last night in the kitchen had come into the yard with a dog, driving the cows to their milking. Ashurst saw that he was lame.

"You've got some good ones there!"

The lame man's face brightened. He had the upward look in his eyes which prolonged suffering often brings.

"Yeas; they'm praaper buties; gude milkers tu."

"I bet they are."

"'Ope as yure leg's better, zurr."

"Thank you, it's getting on."

The lame man touched his own: "I know what 'tes, meself; 'tes a main worritin' thing, the knee. I've a 'ad mine bad this ten year."

Ashurst made the sound of sympathy which comes so readily from those who have an independent income, and the lame man smiled again.

"Mustn't complain, though — they mighty near 'ad it off."

"Ho!"

"Yeas; an' compared with what 'twas, 'tes almost so gude as nu."

"They've put a bandage of splendid stuff on mine."

"The maid she picks et. She'm a gude maid wi' the flowers. There's folks zeem to know the healin' in things. My mother was a rare one for that. 'Ope as yu'll zune be better, zurr. Goo ahn, therr!"

Ashurst smiled. "Wi' the flowers!" A flower herself.

That evening, after his supper of cold duck, junket, and cider, the girl came in.

"Please, auntie says — will you try a piece of our Mayday cake?"

"If I may come to the kitchen for it."

"Oh, yes! You'll be missing your friend."

"Not I. But are you sure no one minds?"

"Who would mind? We shall be very pleased."

Ashurst rose too suddenly for his stiff knee, staggered, and subsided. The girl gave a little gasp, and held out her hands. Ashurst took them, small, rough, brown; checked his impulse to put them to his lips, and let her pull him up. She came close beside him, offering her shoulder. And leaning on her he walked across the room. That shoulder seemed quite the pleasantest thing he had ever touched. But he had presence of mind enough to catch his stick out of the rack, and withdraw his hand before arriving at the kitchen.

That night he slept like a top, and woke with his knee of almost normal size. He again spent the morning in his chair on the grass patch, scribbling down verses; but in the afternoon he wandered about with the two little boys Nick and Rick. It was Saturday, so they were early home from school; quick, shy, dark little rascals of seven and six, soon talkative, for Ashurst had a way with children. By four o'clock they had shown him all their methods of destroying life, except the tickling of trout; and with breeches tucked up, lay on their stomachs over the trout stream, pretending they had this accomplishment also. They tickled nothing, of course, for their giggling and shouting scared every spotted thing away. Ashurst, on a rock at the edge of the beech clump, watched them, and listened to the cuckoos, till Nick, the elder and less persevering, came up and stood beside him.

"The gipsy bogle zets on that stone," he said.

"What gipsy bogle?"

"Dunno; never zeen 'e. Megan zays 'e zets there; an' old Jim zeed 'e once. 'E was zettin' there naight afore our pony kicked-in father's 'ead. 'E plays the viddle."

"What tune does he play?"

"Dunno."

"What's he like?"

"'E's black. Old Jim zays 'e's all over 'air. 'E's a praaper bogle. 'E don' come only at naight." The little boy's oblique dark eyes slid round. "Dy'u think 'e might want to take me away? Megan's feared of 'e."

"Has she seen him?"

"No. She's not afeared o' yu."

"I should think not. Why should she be?"

"She zays a prayer for yu."

"How do you know that, you little rascal?"

"When I was asleep, she said: 'God bless us all, an' Mr. Ashes.' I yeard 'er whisperin'."

"You're a little ruffian to tell what you hear when you're not meant to hear it!"

The little boy was silent. Then he said aggressively:

"I can skin rabbets. Megan, she can't bear skinnin' 'em. I like blood."

"Oh! you do; you little monster!"

"What's that?"

"A creature that likes hurting others."

The little boy scowled. "They'm only dead rabbets, what us eats."

"Quite right, Nick. I beg your pardon."

"I can skin frogs, tu."

But Ashurst had become absent. "God bless us all, and Mr. Ashes!" And puzzled by that sudden inaccessibility, Nick ran back to the stream where the giggling and shouts again uprose at once.

When Megan brought his tea, he said:

"What's the gipsy bogle, Megan?"

She looked up, startled.

"He brings bad things."

"Surely you don't believe in ghosts?"

"I hope I will never see him."

"Of course you won't. There aren't such things. What old Jim saw was a pony."

"No! There are bogles in the rocks; they are the men who lived long ago."

"They aren't gipsies, anyway; those old men were dead long before gipsies came."

She said simply: "They are all bad."

"Why? If there are any, they're only wild, like the rabbits. The flowers aren't bad for being wild; the thorn trees were never planted — and you

don't mind them. I shall go down at night and look for your bogle, and have a talk with him."

"Oh, no! Oh, no!"

"Oh, yes! I shall go and sit on his rock."

She clasped her hands together: "Oh, please!"

"Why! What does it matter if anything happens to me?"

She did not answer; and in a sort of pet he added:

"Well, I daresay I shan't see him, because I suppose I must be off soon."

"Soon?"

"Your aunt won't want to keep me here."

"Oh, yes! We always let lodgings in summer."

Fixing his eyes on her face, he asked:

"Would you like me to stay?"

"Yes."

"I'm going to say a prayer for *you* to-night!"

She flushed crimson, frowned, and went out of the room. He sat cursing himself, till his tea was stewed. It was as if he had hacked with his thick boots at a clump of bluebells. Why had he said such a silly thing? Was he just a towny college ass like Robert Garton, as far from understanding this girl?

4

Ashurst spent the next week confirming the restoration of his leg, by exploration of the country within easy reach. Spring was a revelation to him this year. In a kind of intoxication he would watch the pink-white buds of some backward beech tree sprayed up in the sunlight against the deep blue sky, or the trunks and limbs of the few Scotch firs, tawny in violent light, or again on the moor, the gale-bent larches which had such a look of life when the wind streamed in their young green, above the rusty black underboughs. Or he would lie on the banks, gazing at the clusters of dog-violets, or up in the dead bracken, fingering the pink, transparent buds of the dewberry, while the cuckoos called and yaffles laughed, or a lark, from very high, dripped its beads of song. It was certainly different from any spring he had ever known, for spring was within him, not without. In the daytime he hardly saw the family; and when Megan brought in his meals she always seemed too busy in the house or among the young things in the yard to stay talking long. But in the evenings he installed himself in the window seat in the kitchen, smoking and chatting with the lame man Jim, or Mrs. Narracombe, while the girl sewed, or moved about, clearing the supper things away. And sometimes with the sensation a cat must feel when it purrs, he would become conscious that Megan's eyes — those dew-grey eyes — were fixed on him with a sort of lingering soft look which was strangely flattering.

It was on Sunday week in the evening, when he was lying in the orchard listening to a blackbird and composing a love poem, that he heard the gate swing to, and saw the girl come running among the trees, with the red-cheeked, stolid Joe in swift pursuit. About twenty yards away the chase ended, and the two stood fronting each other, not noticing the stranger in the grass — the boy pressing on, the girl fending him off. Ashurst could see her face, angry, disturbed; and the youth's — who would have thought that red-faced yokel could look so distraught! And painfully affected by that sight, he jumped up. They saw him then. Megan dropped her hands, and shrank behind a tree-trunk; the boy gave an angry grunt, rushed at the bank, scrambled over and vanished. Ashurst went slowly up to her. She was standing quite still, biting her lip — very pretty, with her fine, dark hair blown loose about her face, and her eyes cast down.

"I beg your pardon," he said."

She gave him one upward look, from eyes much dilated; then, catching her breath, turned away. Ashurst followed.

"Megan!"

But she went on; and taking hold of her arm, he turned her gently round to him.

"Stop and speak to me."

"Why do you beg my pardon? It is not to me you should do that."

"Well, then, to Joe."

"How dare he come after me?"

"In love with you, I suppose."

She stamped her foot.

Ashurst uttered a short laugh. "Would you like me to punch his head?"

She cried with sudden passion:

"You laugh at me — you laugh at us!"

He caught hold of her hands, but she shrank back, till her passionate little face and loose dark hair were caught among the pink clusters of the apple blossom. Ashurst raised one of her imprisoned hands and put his lips to it. He felt how chivalrous he was, and superior to that clod Joe — just brushing that small, rough hand with his mouth! Her shrinking ceased suddenly; she seemed to tremble towards him. A sweet warmth overtook Ashurst from top to toe. This slim maiden, so simple and fine and pretty, was pleased, then, at the touch of his lips! And, yielding to a swift impulse, he put his arms round her, pressed her to him, and kissed her forehead. Then he was frightened — she went so pale, closing her eyes, so that the long dark lashes lay on her pale cheeks; her hands, too, lay inert at her sides. The touch of her breast sent a shiver through him. "Megan!" he sighed out, and let her go. In the utter silence a blackbird shouted. Then the girl seized his hand, put it to her cheek, her heart, her lips, kissed it passionately, and fled away among the mossy trunks of the apple trees, till they hid her from him.

Ashurst sat down on a twisted old tree growing almost along the ground, and, all throbbing and bewildered, gazed vacantly at the blossom which had crowned her hair — those pink buds with one white open apple star. What had he done? How had he let himself be thus stampeded by beauty — or — just the spring! He felt curiously happy, all the same; happy and triumphant, with shivers running through his limbs, and a vague alarm. This was the beginning of — what? The midges bit him, the dancing gnats tried to fly into his mouth, and all the spring around him seemed to grow more lovely and alive; the songs of the cuckoos and the blackbirds, the laughter of the yaffles, the level-slanting sunlight, the apple blossom which had crowned her head — ! He got up from the old trunk and strode out of the orchard, wanting space, an open sky, to get on terms with these new sensations. He made for the moor, and from an ash tree in the hedge a magpie flew out to herald him.

Of man — at any age from five years on — who can say he has never been in love? Ashurst had loved his partners at his dancing class; loved his nursery governess; girls in school-holidays; perhaps never been quite out of love, cherishing always some more or less remote admiration. But this was different, not remote at all. Quite a new sensation; terribly delightful, bringing a sense of completed manhood. To be holding in his fingers such a wild flower, to be able to put it to his lips, and feel it tremble with delight against them! What intoxication, and — embarrassment! What to do with it — how meet her next time? His first caress had been cool, pitiful; but the next could not be, now that, by her burning little kiss on his hand, by her pressure of it to her heart, he knew that she loved him. Some natures are coarsened by love bestowed on them; others, like Ashurst's, are swayed and drawn, warmed and softened, almost exalted, by what they feel to be a sort of miracle.

And up there among the tors he was racked between the passionate desire to revel in this new sensation of spring fulfilled within him, and a vague but very real uneasiness. At one moment he gave himself up completely to his pride at having captured this pretty, trustful, dewy-eyed thing! At the next he thought with factitious solemnity: 'Yes, my boy! But look out what you're doing! You know what comes of it!'

Dusk dropped down without his noticing — dusk on the carved, Assyrian-looking masses of the rocks. And the voice of Nature said: "This is a new world for you!" As when a man gets up at four o'clock and goes out into a summer morning, and beasts, birds, trees stare at him and he feels as if all had been made new.

He stayed up there for hours, till it grew cold, then groped his way down the stones and heather roots to the road, back into the lane, and came again past the wild meadow to the orchard. There he struck a match and looked at his watch. Nearly twelve! It was black and unstirring in there now, very different from the lingering, bird-befriended brightness of

six hours ago! And suddenly he saw this idyll of his with the eyes of the outer world — had mental vision of Mrs. Narracombe's snake-like neck turned, her quick dark glance taking it all in, her shrewd face hardening; saw the gipsy-like cousins coarsely mocking and distrustful; Joe stolid and furious; only the lame man, Jim, with the suffering eyes, seemed tolerable to his mind. And the village pub! — the gossiping matrons he passed on his walks; and then — his own friends — Robert Garton's smile when he went off that morning ten days ago; so ironical and knowing! Disgusting! For a minute he literally hated this earthly, cynical world to which one belonged, willy-nilly. The gate where he was leaning grew grey, a sort of shimmer passed before him and spread into the bluish darkness. The moon! He could just see it over the bank behind; red, nearly round — a strange moon! And turning away, he went up the lane which smelled of the night and cow-dung and young leaves. In the straw-yard he could see the dark shapes of cattle, broken by the pale sickles of their horns, like so many thin moons, fallen ends-up. He unlatched the farm gate stealthily. All was dark in the house. Muffling his footsteps, he gained the porch, and, blotted against one of the yew trees, looked up at Megan's window. It was open. Was she sleeping, or lying awake perhaps disturbed — unhappy at his absence? An owl hooted while he stood there peering up, and the sound seemed to fill the whole night, so quiet was all else, save for the never-ending murmur of the stream running below the orchard. The cuckoos by day, and now the owls — how wonderfully they voiced this troubled ecstasy within him! And suddenly he saw her at her window, looking out. He moved a little from the yew tree, and whispered: "Megan!" She drew back, vanished, reappeared, leaning far down. He stole forward on the grass patch, hit his shin against the green-painted chair, and held his breath at the sound. The pale blur of her stretched-down arm and face did not stir; he moved the chair, and noiselessly mounted it. By stretching up his arm he could just reach. Her hand held the huge key of the front door, and he clasped that burning hand with the cold key in it. He could just see her face, the glint of teeth between her lips, her tumbled hair. She was still dressed — poor child, sitting up for him, no doubt! "Pretty Megan!" Her hot, roughened fingers clung to his; her face had a strange, lost look. To have been able to reach it — even with his hand! The owl hooted, a scent of sweetbriar crept into his nostrils. Then one of the farm dogs barked; her grasp relaxed, she shrank back.

"Good-night, Megan!"

"Good-night, sir!" She was gone! With a sigh he dropped back to earth, and sitting on that chair, took off his boots. Nothing for it but to creep in and go to bed; yet for a long while he sat unmoving, his feet chilly in the dew, drunk on the memory of her lost, half-smiling face, and the clinging grip of her burning fingers, pressing the cold key into his hand.

5

He awoke feeling as if he had eaten heavily overnight, instead of having eaten nothing. And far off, unreal, seemed yesterday's romance! Yet it was a golden morning. Full spring had burst at last — in one night the "goldiecups," as the little boys called them, seemed to have made the field their own, and from his window he could see apple blossoms covering the orchard as with a rose and white quilt. He went down almost dreading to see Megan; and yet, when not she but Mrs. Narracombe brought in his breakfast, he felt vexed and disappointed. The woman's quick eye and snaky neck seemed to have a new alacrity this morning. Had she noticed?

"So you an' the moon went walkin' last night, Mr. Ashurst! Did ye have your supper anywheres?"

Ashurst shook his head.

"We kept it for you, but I suppose you was too busy in your brain to think o' such a thing as that?"

Was she mocking him, in that voice of hers, which still kept some Welsh crispness against the invading burr of the West Country? If she knew! And at that moment he thought: 'No, no; I'll clear out. I won't put myself in such a beastly false position.'

But, after breakfast, the longing to see Megan began and increased with every minute, together with fear lest something should have been said to her which had spoiled everything. Sinister that she had not appeared, not given him even a glimpse of her! And the love poem, whose manufacture had been so important and absorbing yesterday afternoon under the apple trees, now seemed so paltry that he tore it up and rolled it into pipe spills. What had he known of love, till she seized his hand and kissed it! And now — what did he not know? But to write of it seemed mere insipidity! He went up to his bedroom to get a book, and his heart began to beat violently, for she was in there making the bed. He stood in the doorway watching; and suddenly, with turbulent joy, he saw her stoop and kiss his pillow, just at the hollow made by his head last night. How let her know he had seen that pretty act of devotion? And yet if she heard him stealing away, it would be even worse. She took the pillow up, holding it as if reluctant to shake out the impress of his cheek, dropped it, and turned round.

"Megan!"

She put her hands up to her cheeks, but her eyes seemed to look right into him. He had never before realised the depth and purity and touching faithfulness in those dew-bright eyes, and he stammered:

"It was sweet of you to wait up for me last night."

She still said nothing, and he stammered on:

"I was wandering about on the moor; it was such a jolly night. I — I've just come up for a book."

Then, the kiss he had seen her give the pillow afflicted him with sudden headiness, and he went up to her. Touching her eyes with his lips, he thought with queer excitement: 'I've done it! Yesterday all was sudden — anyhow; but now — I've done it!' The girl let her forehead rest against his lips, which moved downwards till they reached hers. That first real lover's kiss — strange, wonderful, still almost innocent — in which heart did it make the most disturbance?

"Come to the big apple tree to-night, after they've gone to bed. Megan — promise!"

She whispered back: "I promise!"

Then, scared at her white face, scared at everything, he let her go, and went downstairs again. Yes! he had done it now! Accepted her love, declared his own! He went out to the green chair as devoid of a book as ever; and there he sat staring vacantly before him, triumphant and remorseful, while under his nose and behind his back the work of the farm went on. How long he had been sitting in that curious state of vacancy he had no notion when he saw Joe standing a little behind him to the right. The youth had evidently come from hard work in the fields, and stood shifting his feet, breathing loudly, his face coloured like a setting sun, and his arms, below the rolled-up sleeves of his blue shirt, showing the hue and furry sheen of ripe peaches. His red lips were open, his blue eyes with their flaxen lashes stared fixedly at Ashurst, who said ironically:

"Well, Joe, anything I can do for you?"

"Yeas."

"What, then?"

"Yu can goo away from yere. Us don' want yu."

Ashurst's face, never too humble, assumed its most lordly look.

"Very good of you, but, do you know, I prefer the others should speak for themselves."

The youth moved a pace or two nearer, and the scent of his honest heat afflicted Ashurst's nostrils.

"What d'yu stay yere for?"

"Because it pleases me."

"'Twon't please yu when I've bashed yure head in!"

"Indeed! When would you like to begin that?"

Joe answered only with the loudness of his breathing, but his eyes looked like those of a young and angry bull. Then a sort of spasm seemed to convulse his face.

"Megan don' want yu."

A rush of jealousy, of contempt, and anger with this thick, loud-breathing rustic got the better of Ashurst's self-possession; he jumped up and pushed back his chair.

"You can go to the devil!"

And as he said those simple words, he saw Megan in the doorway with a tiny brown spaniel puppy in her arms. She came up to him quickly:

"It's eyes are blue!" she said.

Joe turned away; the back of his neck was literally crimson.

Ashurst put his finger to the mouth of the little brown bull-frog of a creature in her arms. How cosy it looked against her!

"It's fond of you already. Ah! Megan, everything is fond of *you*."

"What was Joe saying to you, please?"

"Telling me to go away, because you didn't want me here."

She stamped her foot; then looked up at Ashurst. At that adoring look he felt his nerves quiver, just as if he had seen a moth scorching its wings.

"To-night!" he said. "Don't forget!"

"No." And smothering her face against the puppy's little fat, brown body, she slipped back into the house.

Ashurst wandered down the lane. At the gate of the wild meadow he came on the lame man and his cows.

"Beautiful day, Jim!"

"Ah! 'Tes brave weather for the grass. The ashes be later than th' oaks this year. 'When th' oak before th' ash ——'"

Ashurst said idly: "Where were you standing when you saw the gipsy bogle, Jim?"

"It might be under that big apple tree, as you might say."

"And you really do think it was there?"

The lame man answered cautiously:

"I shouldn't like to say rightly that 't *was* there. 'Twas in my mind as 'twas there."

"What do you make of it?"

The lame man lowered his voice.

"They du zay old master, Mist' Narracombe, come o' gipsy stock. But that's tellin'. They'm a wonderful people, yu know, for claimin' their own. Maybe they knu 'e was goin', and sent this feller along for company. That's what I've a-thought about it."

"What was he like?"

"'E 'ad 'air all over 'is face, an' goin' like this, he was, zame as if 'e-'ad a viddle. They zay there's no such thing as bogles, but I've a-zeen the 'air on this dog standin' up of a dark naight, when I couldn' zee nothin', meself."

"Was there a moon?"

"Yeas, very near full, but 'twas on'y just risen, gold-like be'ind them trees."

"And you think a ghost means trouble, do you?"

The lame man pushed his hat up; his aspiring eyes looked at Ashurst more earnestly than ever.

"'Tes not for me to zay that — but 'tes they bein' so unrestin'-like. There's things us don' understand, that's zartin, for zure. There's people that zee things, tu, an' others that don't never zee nothin'. Now, our

Joe — yu might putt anything under 'is eyes an' 'e'd never see it; and them other boys, tu, they'm rattlin' fellers. But yu take an' putt our Megan where there's suthin', she'll zee it, an' more tu, or I'm mistaken."

"She's sensitive, that's why."

"What's that?"

"I mean, she feels everything."

"Ah! She'm very lovin'-'earted."

Ashurst, who felt colour coming into his cheeks, held out his tobacco pouch.

"Have a fill, Jim?"

"Thank 'ee, sir. She'm one in an 'underd, I think."

"I expect so," said Ashurst shortly, and folding up his pouch, walked on.

"Lovin'-'earted!" Yes! And what was he doing? What were his intentions — as they say — towards this loving-hearted girl? The thought dogged him, wandering through fields bright with buttercups, where the little red calves were feeding, and the swallows flying high. Yes, the oaks were before the ashes, brown-gold already; every tree in different stage and hue. The cuckoos and a thousand birds were singing; the little streams were very bright. The ancients believed in a golden age, in the garden of the Hesperides! . . . A queen wasp settled on his sleeve. Each queen wasp killed meant two thousand fewer wasps to thieve the apples which would grow from that blossom in the orchard; but who, with love in his heart, could kill anything on a day like this? He entered a field where a young red bull was feeding. It seemed to Ashurst that he looked like Joe. But the young bull took no notice of this visitor, a little drunk himself, perhaps, on the singing and the glamour of the golden pasture, under his short legs. Ashurst crossed out unchallenged to the hillside above the stream. From that slope a tor mounted to its crown of rocks. The ground there was covered with a mist of bluebells, and nearly a score of crab-apple trees were in full bloom. He threw himself down on the grass. The change from the buttercup glory and oak-goldened glamour of the fields to this ethereal beauty under the grey tor filled him with a sort of wonder; nothing the same, save the sound of running water and the songs of the cuckoos. He lay there a long time, watching the sunlight wheel till the crab-trees threw shadows over the bluebells, his only companions a few wild bees. He was not quite sane, thinking of that morning's kiss, and of to-night under the apple tree. In such a spot as this, fauns and dryads surely lived; nymphs, white as the crab-apple blossoms, retired within those trees; fauns, brown as the dead bracken, with pointed ears, lay in wait for them. The cuckoos were still calling when he woke, there was the sound of running water; but the sun had couched behind the tor, the hillside was cool, and some rabbits had come out. 'To-night!' he thought. Just as from the earth everything was pushing up, unfolding under the

soft insistent fingers of an unseen hand, so were his heart and senses being pushed, unfolded. He got up and broke off a spray from a crab-apple tree. The buds were like Megan — shell-like, rose-pink, wild, and fresh; and so, too, the opening flowers, white, and wild, and touching. He put the spray into his coat. And all the rush of the spring within him escaped in a triumphant sigh. But the rabbits scurried away.

6

It was nearly eleven that night when Ashurst put down the pocket "Odyssey" which for half an hour he had held in his hands without reading, and slipped through the yard down to the orchard. The moon had just risen, very golden, over the hill, and like a bright, powerful, watching spirit peered through the bars of an ash tree's half-naked boughs. In among the apple trees it was still dark, and he stood making sure of his direction, feeling the rough grass with his feet. A black mass close behind him stirred with a heavy grunting sound, and three large pigs settled down again close to each other, under the wall. He listened. There was no wind, but the stream's burbling whispering chuckle had gained twice its daytime strength. One bird, he could not tell what, cried "Pip — pip," "Pip — pip," with perfect monotony; he could hear a nightjar spinning very far off; an owl hooting. Ashurst moved a step or two, and again halted, aware of a dim living whiteness all round his head. On the dark unstirring trees innumerable flowers and buds all soft and blurred were being bewitched to life by the creeping moonlight. He had the oddest feeling of actual companionship, as if a million white moths or spirits had floated in and settled between dark sky and darker ground, and were opening and shutting their wings on a level with his eyes. In the bewildering, still, scentless beauty of that moment he almost lost memory of why he had come to the orchard. The flying glamour which had clothed the earth all day had not gone now that night had fallen, but only changed into this new form. He moved on through the thicket of stems and boughs covered with that live powdering whiteness, till he reached the big apple tree. No mistaking that, even in the dark, nearly twice the height and size of any other, and leaning out towards the open meadows and the stream. Under the thick branches he stood still again, to listen. The same sounds exactly, and a faint grunting from the sleepy pigs. He put his hands on the dry, almost warm tree trunk, whose rough mossy surface gave forth a peaty scent at his touch. Would she come — would she? And among these quivering, haunted, moon-witched trees he was seized with doubts of everything! All was unearthly here, fit for no earthly lovers; fit only for god and goddess, faun and nymph — not for him and this little country girl. Would it not be almost a relief if she did not come? But all the time he was listening. And still that unknown bird went "Pip — pip," "Pip —

pip" and there rose the busy chatter of the little trout stream, whereon the moon was flinging glances through the bars of her tree-prison. The blossom on a level with his eyes seemed to grow more living every moment, seemed with its mysterious white beauty more and more a part of his suspense. He plucked a fragment and held it close — three blossoms. Sacrilege to pluck fruit-tree blossom — soft, sacred, young blossom — and throw it away! Then suddenly he heard the gate close, the pigs stirring again and grunting; and leaning against the trunk, he pressed his hands to its mossy sides behind him, and held his breath. She might have been a spirit threading the trees, for all the noise she made! Then he saw her quite close — her dark form part of a little tree, her white face part of its blossom; so still, and peering towards him. He whispered: "Megan!" and held out his hands. She ran forward, straight to his breast. When he felt her heart beating against him, Ashurst knew to the full the sensations of chivalry and passion. Because she was not of his world, because she was so simple and young and headlong, adoring and defenceless, how could he be other than her protector, in the dark! Because she was all simple Nature and beauty, as much a part of this spring night as was the living blossom, how should he not take all that she would give him — how not fulfil the spring in her heart and his! And torn between these two emotions he clasped her close, and kissed her hair. How long they stood there without speaking he knew not. The stream went on chattering, the owls hooting, the moon kept stealing up and growing whiter; the blossom all round them and above brightened in suspense of living beauty. Their lips had sought each other's, and they did not speak. The moment speech began all would be unreal! Spring has no speech, nothing but rustling and whispering. Spring has so much more than speech in its unfolding flowers and leaves, and the coursing of its streams, and in its sweet restless seeking! And sometimes spring will come alive, and, like a mysterious Presence, stand, encircling lovers with its arms, laying on them the fingers of enchantment, so that, standing lips to lips, they forget everything but just a kiss. While her heart beat against him, and her lips quivered on his, Ashurst felt nothing but simple rapture — Destiny meant her for his arms, Love could not be flouted! But when their lips parted for breath, division began again at once. Only, passion now was so much the stronger, and he sighed:

"Oh! Megan! Why did you come?"

She looked up, hurt, amazed.

"Sir, you asked me to."

"Don't call me 'sir,' my pretty sweet."

"What should I be callin' you?"

"Frank."

"I could not. Oh, no!"

"But you love me — don't you?"

"I could not help lovin' you. I want to be with you — that's all."

"All!"

So faint that he hardly heard, she whispered:

"I shall die if I can't be with you."

Ashurst took a mighty breath.

"Come and be with me, then!"

"Oh!"

Intoxicated by the awe and rapture in that "Oh!" he went on, whispering:

"We'll go to London. I'll show you the world. And I *will* take care of you, I promise, Megan. I'll never be a brute to you!"

"If I can be with you — that is all."

He stroked her hair, and whispered on:

"To-morrow I'll go to Torquay and get some money, and get you some clothes that won't be noticed, and then we'll steal away. And when we get to London, soon perhaps, if you love me well enough, we'll be married."

He could feel her hair shiver with the shake of her head.

"Oh, no! I could not, I only want to be with you!"

Drunk on his own chivalry, Ashurst went on murmuring:

"It's I who am not good enough for you. Oh! Megan, when did you begin to love me?"

"When I saw you in the road, and you looked at me. The first night I loved you; but I never thought you would want me."

She slipped down suddenly to her knees, trying to kiss his feet.

A shiver of horror went through Ashurst; he lifted her up bodily and held her fast — too upset to speak.

She whispered: "Why won't you let me?"

"It's I who will kiss your feet!"

Her smile brought tears into his eyes. The whiteness of her moonlit face so close to his, the faint pink of her opened lips, had the living unearthly beauty of the apple blossom.

And then, suddenly, her eyes widened and stared past him painfully; she writhed out of his arms, and whispered: "Look!"

Ashurst saw nothing but the brightened stream, the furze faintly gilded, the beech trees glistening, and behind them all the wide loom of the moonlit hill. Behind him came her frozen whisper: "The gipsy bogle!"

"Where?"

"There — by the stone — under the trees!"

Exasperated, he leapt the stream, and strode towards the beech clump. Prank of the moonlight! Nothing! In and out of the boulders and thorn trees, muttering and cursing, yet with a kind of terror, he rushed and stumbled. Absurd! Silly! Then he went back to the apple-tree. But she was gone; he could hear a rustle, the grunting of the pigs, the sound of a gate closing. Instead of her, only this old apple tree! He flung his arms

round the trunk. What a substitute for her soft body; the rough moss against his face — what a substitute for her soft cheek; only the scent, as of the woods, a little the same! And above him, and around, the blossoms, more living, more moonlit than ever, seemed to glow and breathe.

7

Descending from the train at Torquay station, Ashurst wandered uncertainly along the front, for he did not know this particular queen of English watering places. Having little sense of what he had on, he was quite unconscious of being remarkable among its inhabitants, and strode along in his rough Norfolk jacket, dusty boots, and battered hat, without observing that people gazed at him rather blankly. He was seeking a branch of his London bank, and having found one, found also the first obstacle to his mood. Did he know anyone in Torquay? No. In that case, if he would wire to his bank in London, they would be happy to oblige him on receipt of the reply. That suspicious breath from the matter-of-fact world somewhat tarnished the brightness of his visions. But he sent the telegram.

Nearly opposite to the post office he saw a shop full of ladies' garments, and examined the window with strange sensations. To have to undertake the clothing of his rustic love was more than a little disturbing. He went in. A young woman came forward; she had blue eyes and a faintly puzzled forehead. Ashurst stared at her in silence.

"Yes, sir?"

"I want a dress for a young lady."

The young woman smiled. Ashurst frowned — the peculiarity of his request struck him with sudden force.

The young woman added hastily:

"What style would you like — something modish?"

"No. Simple."

"What figure would the young lady be?"

"I don't know; about two inches shorter than you, I should say."

"Could you give me her waist measurement?"

Megan's waist!

"Oh! anything usual!"

"Quite!"

While she was gone he stood disconsolately eyeing the models in the window, and suddenly it seemed to him incredible that Megan — his Megan — could ever be dressed save in the rough tweed skirt, coarse blouse, and tam-o'-shanter cap he was wont to see her in. The young woman had come back with several dresses in her arms, and Ashurst eyed her laying them against her own modish figure. There was one whose colour he liked, a dove-grey, but to imagine Megan clothed in it was

beyond him. The young woman went away, and brought some more. But on Ashurst there had now come a feeling of paralysis. How choose? She would want a hat too, and shoes, and gloves; and, suppose, when he had got them all, they commonised her, as Sunday clothes always commonised village folk! Why should she not travel as she was? Ah? But conspicuousness would matter; this was a serious elopement. And, staring at the young woman, he thought: 'I wonder if she guesses, and thinks me a blackguard?'

"Do you mind putting aside that grey one for me?" he said desperately at last. "I can't decide now; I'll come in again this afternoon."

The young woman sighed.

"Oh! certainly. It's a very tasteful costume. I don't think you'll get anything that will suit your purpose better."

"I expect not," Ashurst murmured, and went out.

Freed again from the suspicious matter-of-factness of the world, he took a long breath, and went back to visions. In fancy he saw the trustful pretty creature who was going to join her life to his; saw himself and her stealing forth at night, walking over the moor under the moon, he with his arm around her, and carrying her new garments, till, in some far-off wood, when dawn was coming, she would slip off her old things and put on these, and an early train at a distant station would bear them away on their honeymoon journey, till London swallowed them up, and the dreams of love came true.

"Frank Ashurst! Haven't seen you since Rugby, old chap!"

Ashurst's frown dissolved; the face, close to his own, was blue-eyed, suffused with sun — one of those faces where sun from within and without join in a sort of lustre. And he answered:

"Phil Halliday, by Jove!"

"What are you doing here?"

"Oh! nothing. Just looking round, and getting some money. I'm staying on the moor."

"Are you lunching anywhere? Come and lunch with us; I'm here with my young sisters. They've had measles."

Hooked in by that friendly arm Ashurst went along, up a hill, down a hill, away out of the town, while the voice of Halliday, redolent of optimism as his face was of sun, explained how "in this mouldy place the only decent things were the bathing and boating," and so on, till presently they came to a crescent of houses a little above and back from the sea, and into the centre one — an hotel — made their way.

"Come up to my room and have a wash. Lunch'll be ready in a jiffy."

Ashurst contemplated his visage in a looking-glass. After his farmhouse bedroom, the comb and one spare shirt *régime* of the last fortnight, this room littered with clothes and brushes was a sort of Capua; and he thought: 'Queer — one doesn't realise ——' But what — he did not quite know.

When he followed Halliday into the sitting-room for lunch, three faces, very fair and blue-eyed, were turned suddenly at the words: "This is Frank Ashurst — my young sisters."

Two were indeed young, about eleven and ten. The third was perhaps seventeen, tall and fair-haired too, with pink-and-white cheeks just touched by the sun, and eyebrows, rather darker than the hair, running a little upwards from her nose to their outer points. The voices of all three were like Halliday's, high and cheerful; they stood up straight, shook hands with a quick movement, looked at Ashurst critically, away again at once, and began to talk of what they were going to do in the afternoon. A regular Diana and attendant nymphs! After the farm this crisp, slangy, eager talk, this cool, clean, off-hand refinement, was queer at first, and then so natural that what he had come from became suddenly remote. The names of the two little ones seemed to be Sabina and Freda; of the eldest, Stella.

Presently the one called Sabina turned to him and said:

"I say, will you come shrimping with us? — it's awful fun!"

Surprised by this unexpected friendliness, Ashurst murmured:

"I'm afraid I've got to get back this afternoon."

"Oh!"

"Can't you put it off?"

Ashurst turned to the new speaker, Stella, shook his head, and smiled. She was very pretty! Sabina said regretfully: "You might!" Then the talk switched off to caves and swimming.

"Can you swim far?"

"About two miles."

"Oh!"

"I say!"

"How jolly!"

The three pairs of blue eyes, fixed on him, made him conscious of his new importance. The sensation was agreeable. Halliday said:

"I say, you simply must stop and have a bathe. You'd better stay the night."

"Yes, do!"

But again Ashurst smiled and shook his head. Then suddenly he found himself being catechised about his physical achievements. He had rowed — it seemed — in his college boat, played in his college football team, won his college mile and he rose from table a sort of hero. The two little girls insisted that he must see "their" cave, and they set forth chattering like magpies, Ashurst between them, Stella and her brother a little behind. In the cave, damp and darkish like any other cave, the great feature was a pool with possibility of creatures which might be caught and put into bottles. Sabina and Freda, who wore no stockings on their shapely brown legs, exhorted Ashurst to join them in the middle of it, and help

sieve the water. He too was soon bootless and sockless. Time goes fast for one who has a sense of beauty, when there are pretty children in a pool and a young Diana on the edge, to receive with wonder anything you can catch! Ashurst never had much sense of time. It was a shock when, pulling out his watch, he saw it was well past three. No cashing his cheque to-day — the bank would be closed before he could get there. Watching his expression, the little girls cried out at once:

"Hurrah! Now you'll have to stay!"

Ashurst did not answer. He was seeing again Megan's face, when at breakfast he had whispered: "I'm going to Torquay, darling, to get everything; I shall be back this evening. If it's fine we can go to-night. Be ready." He was seeing again how she quivered and hung on his words. What would she think? Then he pulled himself together, conscious suddenly of the calm scrutiny of this other young girl, so tall and fair and Diana-like, at the edge of the pool, of her wondering blue eyes under those brows which slanted up a little. If they knew what was in his mind —if they knew that this very night he had meant —— ! Well, there would be a little sound of disgust, and he would be alone in the cave. And with a curious mixture of anger, chagrin, and shame, he put his watch back into his pocket and said abruptly:

"Yes; I'm dished for to-day."

"Hurrah! Now you can bathe with us."

It was impossible not to succumb a little to the contentment of these pretty children, to the smile on Stella's lips, to Halliday's "Ripping, old chap! I can lend you things for the night!" But again a spasm of longing and remorse throbbed through Ashurst, and he said moodily:

"I must send a wire!"

The attractions of the pool palling, they went back to the hotel. Ashurst sent his wire, addressing it to Mrs. Narracombe: "Sorry, detained for the night, back to-morrow." Surely Megan would understand that he had too much to do; and his heart grew lighter. It was a lovely afternoon, warm, the sea calm and blue, and swimming his great passion; the favour of these pretty children flattered him, the pleasure of looking at them, at Stella, at Halliday's sunny face; the slight unreality, yet extreme naturalness of it all — as of a last peep at normality before he took this plunge with Megan! He got his borrowed bathing dress, and they all set forth. Halliday and he undressed behind one rock, the three girls behind another. He was first into the sea, and at once swam out with the bravado of justifying his self-given reputation. When he turned he could see Halliday swimming along shore, and the girls flopping and dipping, and riding the little waves, in the way he was accustomed to despise, but now thought pretty and sensible, since it gave him the distinction of the only deep-water fish. But drawing near, he wondered if they would like him, a stranger, to come into their splashing group; he felt shy, approaching

that slim nymph. Then Sabina summoned him to teach her to float, and between them the little girls kept him so busy that he had no time even to notice whether Stella was accustomed to his presence, till suddenly he heard a startled sound from her. She was standing submerged to the waist, leaning a little forward, her slim white arms stretched out and pointing, her wet face puckered by the sun and an expression of fear.

"Look at Phil! Is he all right? Oh, look!"

Ashurst saw at once that Phil was not all right. He was splashing and struggling out of his depth, perhaps a hundred yards away; suddenly he gave up a cry, threw up his arms, and went down. Ashurst saw the girl launch herself towards him, and crying out: "Go back, Stella! Go back!" he dashed out. He had never swum so fast, and reached Halliday just as he was coming up a second time. It was a case of cramp, but to get him in was not difficult, for he did not struggle. The girl, who had stopped when Ashurst told her to, helped as soon as he was in his depth, and once on the beach they sat down one on each side of him to rub his limbs, while the little ones stood by with scared faces. Halliday was soon smiling. It was — he said — rotten of him, absolutely rotten! If Frank would give him an arm, he could get to his clothes all right now. Ashurst gave him the arm, and as he did so caught sight of Stella's face, wet and flushed and tearful, all broken up out of its calm; and he thought: 'I called her Stella! Wonder if she minded?'

While they were dressing, Halliday said quietly:

"You saved my life, old chap!"

"Rot!"

Clothed, but not quite in their right minds, they went up all together to the hotel and sat down to tea, except Halliday, who was lying down in his room. After some slices of bread and jam, Sabina said:

"I say, you know, you *are* a brick!" And Freda chimed in:

"Rather!"

Ashurst saw Stella looking down; he got up in confusion, and went to the window. From there he heard Sabina mutter: "I say, let's swear blood bond. Where's your knife, Freda?" and out of the corner of his eye could see each of them solemnly prick herself, squeeze out a drop of blood and dabble on a bit of paper. He turned and made for the door.

"Don't be a stoat! Come back!" His arms were seized; imprisoned between the little girls he was brought back to the table. On it lay a piece of paper with an effigy drawn in blood, and the three names Stella Halliday, Sabina Halliday, Freda Halliday — also in blood, running towards it like the rays of a star. Sabina said:

"That's you. We shall have to kiss you, you know."

And Freda echoed:

"Oh! Blow — Yes!"

Before Ashurst could escape, some wettish hair dangled against his face,

something like a bite descended on his nose, he felt his left arm pinched, and other teeth softly searching his cheek. Then he was released, and Freda said:

"Now, Stella."

Ashurst, red and rigid, looked across the table at a red and rigid Stella. Sabina giggled; Freda cried:

"Buck up — it spoils everything!"

A queer, ashamed eagerness shot through Ashurst: then he said quietly:

"Shut up, you little demons!"

Again Sabina giggled.

"Well, then, she can kiss her hand, and you can put it against your nose. It *is* on one side!"

To his amazement the girl did kiss her hand and stretch it out. Solemnly he took that cool, slim hand and laid it to his cheek. The two little girls broke into clapping, and Freda said:

"Now, then, we shall have to save your life at any time; that's settled. Can I have another cup, Stella, not so beastly weak?"

Tea was resumed, and Ashurst, folding up the paper, put it in his pocket. The talk turned on the advantages of measles, tangerine oranges, honey in a spoon, no lessons, and so forth. Ashurst listened, silent, exchanging friendly looks with Stella, whose face was again of its normal sun-touched pink and white. It was soothing to be so taken to the heart of this jolly family, fascinating to watch their faces. And after tea, while the two little girls pressed seaweed, he talked to Stella in the window seat and looked at her water-colour sketches. The whole thing was like a pleasurable dream; time and incident hung up, importance and reality suspended. To-morrow he would go back to Megan, with nothing of all this left save the paper with the blood of these children, in his pocket. Children! Stella was not quite that — as old as Megan! Her talk — quick, rather hard and shy, yet friendly — seemed to flourish on his silences, and about her there was something cool and virginal — a maiden in a bower. At dinner, to which Halliday, who had swallowed too much sea-water, did not come, Sabina said:

"I'm going to call you Frank."

Freda echoed:

"Frank, Frank, Franky."

Ashurst grinned and bowed.

"Every time Stella calls you Mr. Ashurst, she's got to pay a forfeit. It's ridiculous."

Ashurst looked at Stella, who grew slowly red. Sabina giggled; Freda cried:

"She's 'smoking' — 'smoking!' — Yah!"

Ashurst reached out to right and left, and grasped some fair hair in each hand.

"Look here," you two! Leave Stella alone, or I'll tie you together!"

Freda gurgled:

"Ouch! You *are* a beast!"

Sabina murmured cautiously:

"*You* call *her* Stella, you see!"

"Why shouldn't I? It's a jolly name!"

"All right; we give you leave to!"

Ashurst released the hair. Stella! What would she call him — after this? But she called him nothing; till at bedtime he said, deliberately:

"Good-night, Stella!"

"Good-night, Mr. —— Good-night, Frank! It *was* jolly of you, you know!"

"Oh — that! Bosh!"

Her quick, straight handshake tightened suddenly, and as suddenly, became slack.

Ashurst stood motionless in the empty sitting-room. Only last night, under the apple tree and the living blossom, he had held Megan to him, kissing her eyes and lips. And he gasped, swept by that rush of remembrance. To-night it should have begun — his life with her who only wanted to be with him! And now, twenty-four hours and more must pass, because — of not looking at his watch! Why had he made friends with this family of innocents just when he was saying good-bye to innocence, and all the rest of it? 'But I mean to marry her,' he thought; 'I told her so!'

He took a candle, lighted it, and went to his bedroom, which was next to Halliday's. His friend's voice called as he was passing:

"Is that you, old chap? I say, come in."

He was sitting up in bed, smoking a pipe and reading.

"Sit down a bit."

Ashurst sat down by the open window.

"I've been thinking about this afternoon, you know," said Halliday rather suddenly. "They say you go through all your past. I didn't. I I suppose I wasn't far enough gone."

"What did you think of?"

Halliday was silent for a little, then said quietly:

"Well, I did think of one thing — rather odd — of a girl at Cambridge that I might have — you know; I was glad I hadn't got her on my mind. Anyhow, old chap, I owe it to you that I'm here; I should have been in the big dark by now. No more bed, or baccy; no more anything. I say, what d'you suppose happens to us?"

Ashurst murmured:

"Go out like flames, I expect."

"Phew!"

"We may flicker, and cling about a bit, perhaps."

"H'm! I think that's rather gloomy. I say, I hope my young sisters have been decent to you?"

"Awfully decent."

Halliday put his pipe down, crossed his hands behind his neck, and turned his face towards the window.

"They're not bad kids!" he said.

Watching his friend, lying there, with that smile, and the candle-light on his face, Ashurst shuddered. Quite true! He might have been lying there with no smile, with all that sunny look gone out for ever! He might not have been lying there at all, but "sanded" at the bottom of the sea, waiting for resurrection on the — ninth day, was it? And that smile of Halliday's seemed to him suddenly something wonderful, as if in it were all the difference between life and death — the little flame — the all! He got up, and said softly:

"Well, you ought to sleep, I expect. Shall I blow out?"

Halliday caught his hand.

"I can't say it, you know; but it must be rotten to be dead. Good-night, old boy!"

Stirred and moved, Ashurst squeezed the hand, and went downstairs. The hall door was still open, and he passed out on to the lawn before the Crescent. The stars were bright in a very dark blue sky, and by their light some lilacs had that mysterious colour of flowers by night which no one can describe. Ashurst pressed his face against a spray; and before his closed eyes Megan started up, with the tiny brown spaniel pup against her breast. "I thought of a girl that I might have — you know. I was glad I hadn't got her on my mind!" He jerked his head away from the lilac, and began pacing up and down over the grass, a grey phantom coming to substance for a moment in the light from the lamp at either end. He was with her again under the living, breathing whiteness of the blossom, the stream chattering by, the moon glinting steel-blue on the bathing-pool; back in the rapture of his kisses on her upturned face of innocence and humble passion, back in the suspense and beauty of that pagan night. He stood still once more in the shadow of the lilacs. Here the sea, not the stream, was Night's voice; the sea with its sigh and rustle; no little bird, no owl, no nightjar called or spun; but a piano tinkled, and the white houses cut the sky with solid curve, and the scent from the lilacs filled the air. A window of the hotel, high up, was lighted; he saw a shadow move across the blind. And most queer sensations stirred within him, a sort of churning, and twining, and turning of a single emotion on itself, as though spring and love, bewildered and confused, seeking the way, were baffled. This girl, who had called him Frank, whose hand had given his that sudden little clutch, this girl so cool and pure — what would *she* think of such wild, unlawful loving? He sank down on the grass, sitting there cross-legged, with his back to the house, motionless as some

carved Buddha. Was he really going to break through innocence, and steal? Sniff the scent out of a wild flower, and — perhaps — throw it away? "Of a girl at Cambridge that I might have — you know!" He put his hands to the grass, one on each side, palms downwards, and pressed; it was just warm still — the grass, barely moist, soft and firm and friendly. 'What am I going to do?' he thought. Perhaps Megan was at her window, looking out at the blossom, thinking of him! Poor little Megan! 'Why not?' he thought. 'I love her! But do I — really love her? or do I only want her because she is so pretty, and loves me? What am I going to do?' The piano tinkled on, the stars winked; and Ashurst gazed out before him at the the dark sea, as if spell-bound. He got up at last, cramped and rather chilly. There was no longer light in any window. And he went in to bed.

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Out of a deep and dreamless sleep he was awakened by the sound of thumping on the door. A shrill voice called:

"Hi! Breakfast's ready."

He jumped up. Where was he ——? Ah!

He found them already eating marmalade, and sat down in the empty place between Stella and Sabina, who, after watching him a little, said:

"I say, do buck up; we're going to start at half-past nine."

"We're going to Berry Head, old chap; you *must* come!"

Ashurst thought: 'Come! Impossible. I shall be getting things and going back.' He looked at Stella. She said quickly:

"Do come!"

Sabina chimed in:

"It'll be no fun without you."

Freda got up and stood behind his chair.

"You've got to come, or else I'll pull your hair!"

Ashurst thought: 'Well — one day more — to think it over! One day more!' And he said:

"All right! You needn't tweak my mane!"

"Hurrah!"

At the station he wrote a second telegram to the farm, and then — tore it up; he could not have explained why. From Brixham they drove in a very little wagonette. There, squeezed between Sabina and Freda, with his knees touching Stella's, they played "Up Jenkins"; and the gloom he was feeling gave way to frolic. In this one day more to think it over, he did not want to think! They ran races, wrestled, paddled — for to-day nobody wanted to bathe — they sang catches, played games, and ate all they had brought. The little girls fell asleep against him on the way back, and his knees still touched Stella's in the wagonette. It seemed incredible that thirty hours ago he had never set eyes on any of those three flaxen

heads. In the train he talked to Stella of poetry, discovering her favourites, and telling her his own with a pleasing sense of superiority; till suddenly she said, rather low:

"Phil says you don't believe in a future life, Frank. I think that's dreadful."

Disconcerted, Ashurst muttered:

"I don't either believe or not believe — I simply don't know."

She said quickly:

"I couldn't bear that. What would be the use of living?"

Watching the frown of those pretty oblique brows, Ashurst answered:

"I don't believe in believing things because one wants to."

"But why should one *wish* to live again, if one isn't going to?"

And she looked full at him.

He did not want to hurt her, but an itch to dominate pushed him on to say:

"While one's alive one naturally wants to go on living for ever; that's part of being alive. But it probably isn't anything more."

"Don't you believe in the Bible at all, then?"

Ashurst thought: 'Now I shall really hurt her!'

"I believe in the Sermon on the Mount, because it's beautiful and good for all time."

"But don't you believe Christ was divine?"

He shook his head.

She turned her face quickly to the window, and there sprang into his mind Megan's prayer, repeated by little Nick: "God bless us all, and Mr. Ashes!" Who else would ever say a prayer for him, like her who at this moment must be waiting — waiting to see him come down the lane? And he thought suddenly: 'What a scoundrel I am!'

All that evening this thought kept coming back: but, as is not unusual, each time with less poignancy, till it seemed almost a matter of course to be a scoundrel. And — strange! — he did not know whether he was a scoundrel if he meant to go back to Megan, or if he did not mean to go back to her.

They played cards till the children were sent off to bed; then Stella went to the piano. From over on the window seat, where it was nearly dark, Ashurst watched her between the candles — that fair head on the long, white neck bending to the movement of her hands. She played fluently, without much expression; but what a picture she made, the faint golden radiance, a sort of angelic atmosphere — hovering about her! Who could have passionate thoughts or wild desires in the presence of that swaying, white-clothed girl with the seraphic head? She played a thing of Schumann's called "*Warum?*" Then Halliday brought out a flute, and the spell was broken. After this they made Ashurst sing, Stella playing him accompaniments from a book of Schumann songs, till, in the middle

of "*Ich grolle nicht,*" two small figures clad in blue dressing-gowns crept in and tried to conceal themselves beneath the piano. The evening broke up in confusion, and what Sabina called "a splendid rag."

That night Ashurst hardly slept at all. He was thinking, tossing and turning. The intense domestic intimacy of these last two days, the strength of this Halliday atmosphere, seemed to ring him round, and make the farm and Megan — even Megan — seem unreal. Had he really made love to her — really promised to take her away to live with him? He must have been bewitched by the spring, the night, the apple blossom! The notion that he was going to make her his mistress — that simple child not yet eighteen — now filled him with a sort of horror, even while it still stung and whipped his blood. He muttered to himself: "It's awful, what I've done — awful!" And the sound of Schumann's music throbbed and mingled with his fevered thoughts, and he saw again Stella's cool, white, fair-haired figure and bending neck, the queer, angelic radiance about her. 'I must have been — I must be — mad!' he thought. 'What came into me? Poor little Megan!' "God bless us all, and Mr. Ashes!" "I want to be with you — only to be with you!" And burying his face in his pillow, he smothered down a fit of sobbing. Not to go back was awful! To go back — more awful still!

Emotion, when you are young, and give real vent to it, loses its power of torture. And he fell asleep, thinking: 'What was it — a few kisses — all forgotten in a month!'

Next morning he got his cheque cashed, but avoided the shop of the dove-grey dress like the plague; and, instead, bought himself some necessaries. He spent the whole day in a queer mood, cherishing a kind of sullenness against himself. Instead of the hankering of the last two days, he felt nothing but a blank — all passionate longing gone, as if quenched in that outburst of tears. After tea Stella put a book down beside him, and said shyly:

"Have you read that, Frank?"

It was Farrar's *Life of Christ.* Ashurst smiled. Her anxiety about his beliefs seemed to him comic, but touching. Infectious, too, perhaps, for he began to have an itch to justify himself, if not to convert her. And in the evening, when the children and Halliday were mending their shrimping nets, he said:

"At the back of orthodox religion, so far as I can see, there's always the idea of reward — what you can get for being good; a kind of begging for favours. I think it all starts in fear."

She was sitting on the sofa making reefer knots with a bit of string. She looked up quickly:

"I think it's much deeper than that."

Ashurst felt again that wish to dominate.

"You think so," he said; "but wanting the '*quid pro quo*' is about the deepest thing in all of us! It's jolly hard to get to the bottom of it!"

She wrinkled her brows in a puzzled frown.

"I don't think I understand."

He went on obstinately:

"Well, think, and see if the most religious people aren't those who feel that this life doesn't give them all they want. I believe in being good because to be good is good in itself."

"Then you do believe in being good?"

How pretty she looked now — it was easy to be good with her! And he nodded and said:

"I say, show me how to make that knot!"

With her fingers touching his, in manœuvring the bit of string he felt soothed and happy. And when he went to bed he wilfully kept his thoughts on her, wrapping himself in her fair, cool sisterly radiance, as in some garment of protection.

Next day he found they had arranged to go by train to Totnes, and picnic at Berry Pomeroy Castle. Still in that resolute oblivion of the past, he took his place with them in the landau beside Halliday, back to the horses. And, then, along the sea front, nearly at the turning to the railway station, his heart almost leaped into his mouth. Megan — Megan herself! — was walking on the far pathway, in her old skirt and jacket and her tam-o'-shanter, looking up into the faces of the passers-by. Instinctively he threw his hand up for cover, then made a feint of clearing dust out of his eyes; but between his fingers he could see her still, moving, not with her free country step, but wavering, lost-looking, pitiful — like some little dog which has missed its master and does not know whether to run on, to run back — where to run. How had she come like this? — what excuse had she found to get away? — what did she hope for? But with every turn of the wheels bearing him away from her, his heart revolted and cried to him to stop them, to get out and go to her. When the landau turned the corner to the station he could stand it no more, and opening the carriage door, muttered: "I've forgotten something! Go on — don't wait for me! I'll join you at the castle by the next train!" He jumped, stumbled, spun round, recovered his balance, and walked forward, while the carriage with the astonished Hallidays rolled on.

From the corner he could only just see Megan, a long way ahead now. He ran a few steps, checked himself, and dropped into a walk. With each step nearer to her, further from the Hallidays, he walked more and more slowly. How did it alter anything — this sight of her? How make the going to her, and that which must come of it, less ugly? For there was no hiding it — since he had met the Hallidays he had become gradually sure that he would not marry Megan. It would only be a wild love-time, a troubled, remorseful, difficult time — and then — well, then he would get tired, just because she gave him everything, was so simple, and so trustful, so dewy. And dew — wears off! The little spot of faded colour, her tam-

o'-shanter cap, wavered on far in front of him; she was looking up into every face, and at the house windows. Had any man ever such a cruel moment to go through? Whatever he did, he felt he would be a beast. And he uttered a groan which made a nursemaid turn and stare. He saw Megan stop and lean against the sea-wall, looking at the sea; and he too stopped. Quite likely she had never seen the sea before, and even in her distress could not resist that sight. 'Yes — she's seen nothing,' he thought; 'everything's before her. And just for a few weeks' passion, I shall be cutting her life to ribbons. I'd better go and hang myself rather than do it!' And suddenly he seemed to see Stella's calm eyes looking into his, the wave of fluffy hair on her forehead stirred by the wind. Ah! it would be madness, would mean giving up all that he respected, and his own self-respect. He turned and walked quickly back towards the station. But memory of that poor, bewildered little figure, those anxious eyes searching the passers-by, smote him too hard again, and once more he turned towards the sea. The cap was no longer visible; that little spot of colour had vanished in the stream of the noon promenaders. And impelled by the passion of longing, the dearth which comes on one when life seems to be whiling something out of reach, he hurried forward. She was nowhere to be seen; for half an hour he looked for her; then on the beach flung himself face downward in the sand. To find her again he knew he had only to go to the station and wait till she returned from her fruitless quest, to take her train home; or to take train himself and go back to the farm, so that she found him there when she returned. But he lay inert in the sand, among the indifferent groups of children with their spades and buckets. Pity at her little figure wandering, seeking, was well-nigh merged in the spring-running of his blood; for it was all wild feeling now — the chivalrous part, what there had been of it, was gone. He wanted her again, wanted her kisses, her soft, little body, her abandonment, all her quick, warm, pagan emotion; wanted the wonderful feeling of that night under the moon-lit apple boughs; wanted it all with a horrible intensity; as the faun wants the nymph. The quick chatter of the little bright trout-stream, the dazzle of the buttercups, the rocks of the old "wild men"; the calling of the cuckoos and yaffles, the hooting of the owls; and the red moon peeping out of the velvet dark at the living whiteness of the blossom; and her face just out of reach at the window, lost in its love-look; and her heart against his, her lips answering his, under the apple tree — all this besieged him. Yet he lay inert. What was it which struggled against pity and this feverish longing, and kept him there paralysed in the warm sand? Three flaxen heads — a fair face with friendly blue-grey eyes, a slim hand pressing his, a quick voice speaking his name — "So you do believe in being good?" Yes, and a sort of atmosphere as of some old walled-in English garden, with pinks, and cornflowers, and roses, and scents of lavender and lilac — cool and fair,

untouched, almost holy — all that he had been brought up to feel was clean and good. And suddenly he thought: 'She might come along the front again and see me!' and he got up and made his way to the rock at the far end of the beach. There, with the spray biting into his face, he could think more coolly. To go back to the farm and love Megan out in the woods, among the rocks, with everything around wild and fitting — that, he knew, was impossible, utterly. To transplant her to a great town, to keep, in some little flat or rooms, one who belonged so wholly to Nature — the poet in him shrank from it. His passion would be a mere sensuous revel, soon gone; in London, her very simplicity, her lack of all intellectual quality, would make her his secret plaything — nothing else. The longer he sat on the rock, with his feet dangling over a greenish pool from which the sea was ebbing, the more clearly he saw this; but it was as if her arms and all of her were slipping slowly, slowly down from him, into the pool, to be carried away out to sea; and her face looking up, her lost face with beseeching eyes, and dark, wet hair — possessed, haunted, tortured him! He got up at last, scaled the low rock-cliff, and made his way down into a sheltered cove. Perhaps in the sea he could get back his control — lose this fever! And stripping off his clothes, he swam out. He wanted to tire himself so that nothing mattered, and swam recklessly, fast and far; then suddenly, for no reason, felt afraid. Suppose he could not reach shore again — suppose the current set him out — or he got cramp, like Halliday! He turned to swim in. The red cliffs looked a long way off. If he were drowned they would find his clothes. The Hallidays would know; but Megan perhaps never — they took no newspaper at the farm. And Phil Halliday's words came back to him again: "A girl at Cambridge I might have —— Glad I haven't got her on my mind!" And in that moment of unreasoning fear he vowed he would not have her on his mind. Then his fear left him; he swam in easily enough, dried himself in the sun, and put on his clothes. His heart felt sore, but no longer ached; his body cool and refreshed.

When one is as young as Ashurst, pity is not a violent emotion. And, back in the Halliday's sitting-room, eating a ravenous tea, he felt much like a man recovered from fever. Everything seemed new and clear; the tea, the buttered toast and jam tasted absurdly good; tobacco had never smelt so nice. And walking up and down the empty room, he stopped here and there to touch or look. He took up Stella's work-basket, fingered the cotton reels and a gaily-coloured plait of sewing silks, smelt at the little bag filled with woodroffe she kept among them. He sat down at the piano, playing tunes with one finger, thinking: 'To-night she'll play; I shall watch her while she's playing; it does me good to watch her.' He took up the book, which still lay where she had placed it beside him, and tried to read. But Megan's little, sad figure began to come back at once, and he got up and leaned in the window, listening to the thrushes

in the Crescent gardens, gazing at the sea, dreamy and blue below the trees. A servant came in and cleared the tea away, and he still stood, inhaling the evening air, trying not to think. Then he saw the Hallidays coming through the gate of the Crescent, Stella a little in front of Phil and the children, with their baskets, and instinctively he drew back. His heart, too sore and discomfited, shrank from this encounter, yet wanted its friendly solace — bore a grudge against this influence, yet craved its cool innocence, and the pleasure of watching Stella's face. From against the wall behind the piano he saw her come in and stand looking a little blank as though disappointed; then she saw him and smiled, a swift, brilliant smile which warmed yet irritated Ashurst.

"You never came after us, Frank."

"No; I found I couldn't."

"Look! We picked such lovely late violets!" She held out a bunch. Ashurst put his nose to them, and there stirred within him vague longings, chilled instantly by a vision of Megan's anxious face lifted to the faces of the passers-by.

He said shortly: "How jolly!" and turned away. He went up to his room, and, avoiding the children, who were coming up the stairs, threw himself on his bed, and lay there with his arms crossed over his face. Now that he felt the die really cast, and Megan given up, he hated himself, and almost hated the Hallidays and their atmosphere of healthy, happy English homes. Why should they have chanced here, to drive away first love — to show him that he was going to be no better than a common seducer? What right had Stella, with her fair, shy beauty, to make him know for certain that he would never marry Megan; and, tarnishing it all, bring him such bitterness of regretful longing and such pity? Megan would be back by now, worn out by her miserable seeking — poor little thing! — expecting, perhaps, to find him there when she reached home. Ashurst bit at his sleeve, to stifle a groan of remorseful longing. He went to dinner glum and silent, and his mood threw a dinge even over the children. It was a melancholy, rather ill-tempered evening, for they were all tired; several times he caught Stella looking at him with a hurt, puzzled expression, and this pleased his evil mood. He slept miserably; got up quite early, and wandered out. He went down to the beach. Alone there with the serene, the blue, the sunlit sea, his heart relaxed a little. Conceited fool — to think that Megan would take it so hard! In a week or two she would almost have forgotten! And he — well, he would have the reward of virtue! A good young man! If Stella knew, she would give him her blessing for resisting that devil she believed in; and he uttered a hard laugh. But slowly the peace and beauty of sea and sky, the flight of the lonely seagulls, made him feel ashamed. He bathed, and turned homewards.

In the Crescent gardens Stella herself was sitting on a camp stool, sketching. He stole up close behind. How fair and pretty she was, bent diligently, holding up her brush, measuring, wrinkling her brows.

He said gently:

"Sorry I was such a beast last night, Stella."

She turned round, startled, flushed very pink, and said in her quick way:

"It's all right. I knew there was something. Between friends it doesn't matter, does it?"

Ashurst answered:

"Between friends — and we are, aren't we?"

She looked up at him, nodded vehemently, and her upper teeth gleamed again in that swift, brilliant smile.

Three days later he went back to London, travelling with the Hallidays. He had not written to the farm. What was there he could say?

On the last day of April in the following year he and Stella were married. . . .

Such were Ashurst's memories, sitting against the wall among the gorse, on his silver-wedding day. At this very spot, where he had laid out the lunch, Megan must have stood outlined against the sky when he had first caught sight of her. Of all queer coincidences! And there moved in him a longing to go down and see again the farm and the orchard, and the meadow of the gipsy bogle. It would not take long; Stella would be an hour yet, perhaps.

How well he remembered it all — the little crowning group of pine trees, the steep-up grass hill behind! He paused at the farm gate. The low stone house, the yew-tree porch, the flowering currants — not changed a bit; even the old green chair was out there on the grass under the window, where he had reached up to her that night to take the key. Then he turned down the lane, and stood leaning on the orchard gate — grey skeleton of a gate, as then. A black pig even was wandering in there among the trees. Was it true that twenty-six years had passed, or had he dreamed and awakened to find Megan waiting for him by the big apple tree? Unconsciously he put up his hand to his grizzled beard and brought himself back to reality. Opening the gate, he made his way down through the docks and nettles till he came to the edge, and the old apple tree itself. Unchanged! A little more of the grey-green lichen, a dead branch or two, and for the rest it might have been only last night that he had embraced that mossy trunk after Megan's flight and inhaled its woody savour, while above his head the moonlit blossom had seemed to breathe and live. In that early spring a few buds were showing already; the blackbirds shouting their songs, a cuckoo calling, the sunlight bright and warm. Incredibly the same — the chattering trout-stream, the narrow pool he had lain in every morning, splashing the water over his flanks and chest; and out there in the wild meadow the beech clump and the stone where the gipsy bogle was supposed to sit. And an ache for lost youth, a hanker-

ing, a sense of wasted love and sweetness, gripped Ashurst by the throat. Surely, on this earth of such wild beauty, one was meant to hold rapture to one's heart, as this earth and sky held it! And yet, one could not!

He went to the edge of the stream, and looking down at the little pool, thought: 'Youth and spring! What has become of them all, I wonder?' And then, in sudden fear of having this memory jarred by human encounter, he went back to the lane, and pensively retraced his steps to the cross-roads.

Beside the car an old, grey-bearded labourer was leaning on a stick, talking to the chauffeur. He broke off at once, as though guilty of disrespect, and touching his hat, prepared to limp on down the lane.

Ashurst pointed to the narrow green mound. "Can you tell me what this is?"

The old fellow stopped; on his face had come a look as though he were thinking: 'You've come to the right shop, Mister!'

"'Tes a grave," he said.

"But why out here?"

The old man smiled. "That's a tale, as yu may say. An' not the first time as I've a-told et — there's plenty folks asks 'bout that bit o' turf. 'Maid's Grave' us calls et, 'ereabouts."

Ashurst held out his pouch. "Have a fill?"

The old man touched his hat again, and slowly filled an old clay pipe. His eyes, looking upward out of a mass of wrinkles and hair, were still quite bright.

"If yu don' mind, zurr, I'll zet down — my leg's 'urtin' a bit to-day." And he sat down on the mound of turf.

"There's always a vlower on this grave. An' 'tain't so very lonesome, neither; brave lot o' folks goes by now, in they new motor cars an' things — not as 'twas in th' old days. She've a-got company up 'ere. 'Twas a poor soul killed 'erself."

"I see!" said Ashurst. "Cross-roads burial. I didn't know that custom was kept up."

"Ah! but 'twas a main long time ago. Us 'ad a parson as was very God-fearin' then. Let me see, I've 'ad my pension six year come Michaelmas, an' I were just on fifty when t'appened. There's none livin' knows more about et than what I du. She belonged close 'ere; same farm as where I used to work along o' Mrs. Narracombe — 'tes Nick Narracombe's now; I dus a bit for 'im still, odd times."

Ashurst, who was leaning against the gate, lighting his pipe, left his curved hands before his face for long after the flame of the match had gone out.

"Yes?" he said, and to himself his voice sounded hoarse and queer.

"She was one in an 'underd, poor maid! I putts a vlower 'ere every time I passes. Pretty maid an' gude maid she was, though they wouldn't

burry 'er up tu th' church, nor where she wanted to be burried neither." The old labourer paused, and put his hairy, twisted hand flat down on the turf beside the bluebells.

"Yes?" said Ashurst.

"In a manner of speakin'," the old man went on, "I think as 'twas a love-story — though there's no one never knu for zartin. Yu can't tell what's in a maid's 'ead — but that's wot I think about it." He drew his hand along the turf. "I was fond o' that maid — don' know as there was anyone as wasn' fond of 'er. But she was tu lovin'-'earted — that's where 'twas, I think." He looked up. And Ashurst, whose lips were trembling in the cover of his beard, murmured again: "Yes?"

"'Twas in the spring, 'bout now as't might be, or a little later — blossom time — an' we 'ad one o' they young college gentlemen stayin' at the farm — nice feller tu, with 'is 'ead in the air. I liked 'e very well, an' I never see nothin' between 'em, but to my thinkin' e' turned the maid's fancy." The old man took the pipe out of his mouth, spat, and went on:

"Yu see, 'e went away sudden one day, an' never come back. They got 'is knapsack and bits o' things down there still. That's what stuck in my mind — 'is never sendin' for 'em. 'Is name was Ashes, or somethin' like that."

"Yes?" said Ashurst once more.

The old man licked his lips.

"'Er never said nothin', but from that day 'er went kind of dazed lukin'; didn' seem rightly therr at all. I never knu a 'uman creature so changed in me life — never. There was another young feller at the farm — Joe Biddaford 'is name wer', that was praaperly sweet on 'er, tu; I guess 'e used to plague 'er wi' 'is attentions. She got to luke quite wild. I'd zee her sometimes of an avenin' when I was bringin' up the calves; ther' she'd stand in th' orchard, under the big apple tree, lukin' straight before 'er. 'Well,' I used t'think, 'I dunno what 'tes that's the matter wi' yu, but yu'm lukin' pittiful, that yu be!'"

The old man relit his pipe, and sucked at it reflectively.

"Yes?" said Ashurst.

"I remembers one day I said to 'er; 'What's the matter, Megan?' — 'er name was Megan David, she come from Wales same as 'er aunt, ol' Missis Narracombe. 'Yu'm frettin' about something,' I says. 'No, Jim,' she says, 'I'm not frettin'.' 'Yes, yu be!' I says. 'No,' she says, and tu tears cam' rollin' out. 'Yu'm cryin' — what's that, then?' I says. She putts 'er 'and over 'er 'eart: 'It 'urts me,' she says; 'but 'twill sune be better,' she says. 'But if anything shude 'appen to me, Jim, I wants to be burried under this 'ere apple tree.' I laughed. 'What's goin' to 'appen to yu?' I says: 'don't 'ee be fulish.' 'No,' she says, 'I won't be fulish.' Well, I know what maids are, an' I never thought no more about et, till tu days arter that, 'bout six in the avenin' I was comin' up wi' the calves,

when I see somethin' dark lyin' in the strame, close to that big apple tree. I says to meself: 'Is that a pig — funny place for a pig to get to!' an' I goes up to et, an' I see what 'twas."

The old man stopped: his eyes, turned upward, had a bright, suffering look.

"'Twas the maid, in a little narrer pool ther' that's made by the stoppin' of a rock — where I see the young gentleman bathin' once or twice. 'Er was lyin' on 'er face in the watter. There was a plant o' goldie-cups growin' out o' the stone just above 'er 'ead. An' when I come to luke at 'er face, 'twas luvly, buitful, so calm's a baby's — wonderful butiful et was. When the docter saw 'er, 'e said: ''Er culdn' never a-done it in that little bit o' watter ef 'er 'adn't a-been in an extarsy.' Ah! an' judgin' from 'er face, that was just 'ow she was. Et made me cry praaper — butiful et was! 'Twas June then, but she'd a-found a little bit of apple-blossom left over somewheres, and stuck et in 'er 'air. That's why I thinks 'er must a-been in an extarsy, to go to et gay, like that. Why! there wasn't more than a fute and 'arf o' watter. But I tell 'ee one thing — that meadder's 'arnted; I knu et, an' she knu et; an' no one'll persuade me as 'tesn't. I told 'em what she said to me 'bout bein' burried under th' apple tree. But I think that turned 'em — made et luke tu much 's ef she'd 'ad it in 'er mind deliberate; an' so they burried 'er up 'ere. Parson we 'ad then was very particular, 'e was."

Again the old man drew his hand over the turf.

"'Tes wonderful, et seems," he added slowly, "what maids'll du for love. She 'ad a lovin' 'eart; I guess 'twas broken. But us never *knu* nothin'!"

He looked up as if for approval of his story, but Ashurst had walked past him as if he were not there.

Up on the top of the hill, beyond where he had spread the lunch, over, out of sight, he lay down on his face. So had his virtue been rewarded, and "the Cyprian," goddess of love, taken her revenge! And before his eyes, dim with tears, came Megan's face with the sprig of apple blossoms in her dark, wet hair. 'What did I do that was wrong?' he thought. 'What did I do?' But he could not answer. Spring, with its rush of passion, its flowers and song — the spring in his heart and Megan's! Was it just Love seeking a victim! The Greek was right, then — the words of the "Hippolytus" as true to-day!

"For mad is the heart of Love,
And gold the gleam of his wing;
And all to the spell thereof
Bend when he makes his spring.
All life that is wild and young
In mountain and wave and stream,
All that of earth is sprung,

Or breathes in the red sunbeam;
Yea, and Mankind. O'er all a royal throne
Cyprian, Cyprian, is thine alone!"

The Greek was right! Megan! Poor little Megan — coming over the hill! Megan under the old apple tree waiting and looking! Megan dead, with beauty printed on her! . . .

A voice said:

"Oh, there you are! Look."

Ashurst rose, took his wife's sketch, and stared at it in silence.

"Is the foreground right, Frank?"

"Yes."

"But there's something wanting, isn't there?"

Ashurst nodded. Wanting? The apple tree, the singing, and the gold!

Germany

INTRODUCTION

THE very earliest surviving fragment of literature written in the German vernacular is part of a longer narrative, and is in itself a short story. *The Lay of Hildebrand* dates from the early Ninth Century, A.D. Stories and romances, satires and epics flourished throughout the German-speaking lands during the next six centuries. Toward the end of the Twelfth Century was developed the courtly romance. To this period belongs the greatest of the German epic poems, *The Nibelungenlied*, or *Lay of the Nibelungs*. During the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries the influence of France was very strongly marked in the romantic poems of the famous Minnesingers, Wolfram Von Eschenbach, Hartmann von Aue, and Gottfried von Strassburg. Before the beginning of the decline of the type of story developed by these writers, other forms were introduced and developed by popular writers; realistic and satirical works like Wernher's *Farmer Helmbrecht* (1250) and the *Reynard the Fox* collections. In the Sixteenth Century the accumulated wisdom and folk-material of the people were gathered together in such works as *Till Eulenspiegel*, Pauli's *Jest and Earnest*, and the Faust chapbooks.

The Italian Renaissance and the classical movement in Seventeenth Century France were both productive of much fiction in Germany, though there was little written that is strikingly original or spontaneous.

It was not until the Romantic period of the late Eighteenth Century and early Nineteenth, that the Germans began to write that kind of narrative known as the *Erzählung*, a sort of short novel that reached its technical perfection in the work of Gottfried Keller, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, and Theodor Storm. Earlier in the Century such men as Chamisso, Hoffmann, La Motte-Fouqué, and Zschokke, had retold the old German legends in romantic fashion and written a number of tales of contemporary life, but their successors applied themselves almost exclusively to the development of the *Erzählung* as an art form. Keller, Storm, and Meyer made of it as perfect a medium for the presentation of character and atmosphere as Maupassant made of the short story. In their hands it became, at its best, a veritable novel in miniature.

HARTMANN VON AUE

(About 1170–1215)

HARTMANN VON AUE was born in Swabia about the year 1170. He joined the lord of Aue, and in 1196 went on the Crusade. Besides the tale printed below, he is the author of *Eric* and *Iwein*, both based on Arthurian stories by the French poet Chrestien de Troyes.

Poor Heinrich is one of the best-told and loveliest of all the Medieval legends. In the words of Longfellow, who retold it in his *Golden Legend*, it surpasses all other legends "in beauty and significance."

This tale was especially translated for this volume by Marie Ottilie Heyl. The translation appears here for the first time in English, by special arrangement with the translator.

POOR HEINRICH

THERE was a knight so learned in books that he read, forsooth, whatever he found written therein. Hartmann was his name, and he was a vassal at Aue. Oft would he look about him in all manner of books for knowledge to beguile the long and heavy hours. Moreover, he sought, this worthy man, to learn all that could bring him honor in the eyes of God, and the love of his fellow-men.

Here beginneth he to relate a tale that he found written. No other reward does he beg, save that whosoever reads or hears, may breathe one prayer for the salvation of his soul. Truly is it written that man is his own intercessor, and that he saveth his own soul who prayeth for the remission of another's sins.

A wondrous tale he read, of a knight who once lived in Swabia. Not a single courtly virtue lacked this true and noble man. The fame of no other had spread abroad so wide to every land. Besides all this, noble birth and riches beyond count were his, and high nobility. However great his wealth might be, his rank stood unchangeable, equal to that of any prince. But, for all this, he was not so greatly endowed with rank and treasure, as with honor and courage.

His name was verily famed afar — he was called Sir Heinrich, and was born at Aue. His steadfast heart had forsworn all falsehood and discourtesy, and to this oath he held until the end; spotless alike were his honor and his life. Talent was bestowed on him for winning earthly glory, and this he increased with every kind of high virtue. He was the flower

of chivalry, and esteemed the mirror of earthly joy; a diamond of constancy and a crown of temperance, the refuge of all men in trouble; a shield and buckler to his kin: none ever appealed to him in vain. In his abode, want was unknown; nor might excessive luxury be found. The heavy fardel of honor he bore on his own back. Sage was his counsel, and right well did he know how to sing of love. So was he fain to win the world's praise and guerdon.

But even as Sir Heinrich was at the height of honor and wealth, and with untroubled mind revelled in earthly joy (for, indeed, of his kin was he most loved and praised) his joy on a sudden was changed to black despair.

To him was it made known, just as to Absalom of old, that such an idle crown of earthly joy and sweetness, is ofttimes trodden underfoot with all its glory and its power; for so the Holy Scripture foretells. Thus is it written:

"In the midst of life we find ourselves in the very presence of death." Verily thus do I expound this unto you: that we hover on the brink of eternity, when most we believe that all is well.

For the stability of this world, its permanence and certainty, and all its glory and power stand beyond the control of mortal man. The candle offers a true picture of this: is it not burning to dust and ashes, even while shedding the most resplendent light? We are indeed ephemeral beings. How often is our laughter drowned in tears! How soon our joy mingled with the bitterness of gall! The flower falls at the height of its beauty. This (oh, heavy grief!) befell poor Sir Heinrich, who in the midst of a joyous carefree life upon this earth felt the heavy hand of God laid upon him. At His command did the knight fall from his high estate into most dire affliction, for a loathsome leprosy seized upon him. Then all who beheld God's punishment laid so upon his limbs, yea, men and women, too, did flee his very presence. Behold, he for whom all doors had opened wide, seemed now so disgusting, that none willingly looked upon him; as it had once befallen Job, the noble and the rich, who (sorrow without equal) from the peak of happiness was cast into the depths of grief.

But, alas! when Heinrich found that he disgusted all the world (as it hath ever been with such as he) then in his sore affliction did he show none of the patience of good Job; for Job, the pious, suffered with a truly patient spirit, for his soul's salvation, all that was laid upon him, sickness and shame in the eyes of the world; yea, he ever praised his God, and welcomed tribulation.

But poor Heinrich never bore his trials thus; nor did he cease from repining; his proud heart sickened; joy, once so light, sank within him like a stone; his pride trailed in the dust; his honey turned to gall: a grim dark thunderbolt had shot through the brightness of his noonday and a dense black cloud veiled the glory of his sun.

Sorely did he grieve that he must now renounce so many honors. With evil hatred in his heart, he ofttimes cursed the day he first saw the light.

One small ray of comfort broke through all this gloom: for oftentimes was he told when seeking aid and counsel, that his malady appears in many forms, and even for him relief might yet be found. So was he ever sustained in hope and thought. He bethought him that he might readily be cured and, on the counsel of his physician, swiftly rode to Montpélier in France, where he found nought but the sorrowful confirmation of his fears, that he might never be relieved of his burden.

This news he heard in sorrow, then straightway to Salerno turned his face, hoping there to be made whole by the counsel of the wisest doctors. The greatest master he consulted there, who gave him a most strange answer: namely that he might be cured, but that he never would be.

He spoke: "How can this be? Speak! It is impossible. If I *can* be cured, then I *must* be, in faith. Whatever penance may be laid on me, whatever it may cost in gold or striving, I swear it shall be done."

"Still, success shall not be thine," the master's answer came. "For such is thine affliction! What boots it that I should expound to thee? But one cure only, friend, will make thee whole. None hath ever been so rich or strong of heart, that he could succeed. Thou canst not, therefore, hope ever to be healed, unless God Himself become thy doctor."

Then spoke poor Heinrich: "Why dost thou discourage me? I am rich in worldly goods. If thou makest use of thine art and skill upon me, not refusing my silver and bright gold, I shall make thee so beholden unto me, that thou shalt speak loud thy blessings on the day my cure is wrought."

"Thy wish would be well answered," came the master's voice, "were but the physic such as might be bought at any price. In truth, thou shouldst then be healed. But alas! This may not be. For hearken to me, since thou implorest my help. Thou must bring hither a maid, of marriageable age, who knowingly and willingly will die and suffer death for thy sake. But among mankind it is not given that one should do this of his own free will. No other remedy availeth, but the heart's blood of a chaste virgin. That alone, my friend, will affect a perfect cure."

Poor Heinrich knew full well it was not possible to find one who would gladly die for him. And in that moment was all comfort snatched from him that had but now been offered, and from that selfsame hour he renounced all hope of being whole again. And straightway his heart's heaviness became violent and great; nought grieved him so sore as the thought that he must spend more days upon this earth. Home he returned, and began to bestow his goodly heritage, all that he owned, even as the wishes of his heart and good counsel bade him. Taking careful thought, he made his poor friends rich, and gave succor to the stranger poor, so that God might take pity on his soul; and what was left over he shared among the

houses of God. In this wise, he disposed of his goods, all but a small farmstead, whither he fled, and there he lived apart from all men. But he did not bewail his sorry state alone, for in all parts where he was known, men pitied him; and even in strange places, where his repute had spread, was wailing heard for his affliction. One who had ever tilled that ground, and now again harrowed it with skill, was a free husbandman, who but seldom suffered such misfortune as other peasants had to bear, who served less noble masters, and ill could spare the money for taxes, or payment in kind. All that this peasant did, seemed to his lord both good and right; great care he took that he should never receive work or assistance from without. Therefore, none of his station was so prosperous as he. To this good man his lord, poor Heinrich, retired. What this kind master had done for his servant, was now, in ample measure, repaid unto him.

To this husbandman had God given a happy and blameless existence. He had a healthy body, a thrifty wife, and beautiful children: these are a joy to any man. Among them, it is told, was a lovely maid, a child of eight years. She loved virtue above all else, and would not stir a foot away from her kind lord. To win his favor and his praise, she cared for him in every way with tender kindness. So pleasing was she altogether, that she was fit for a king's child in all her beauty and her gentleness. The others only pondered how, with all due courtesy, they might avoid him still, but she at all times went to him, and would be nowhere else but at his side. Daily she amused him, and with a child's pure goodness thought ever of her gentle lord, and made her constant station at his feet. With sweetest industry she stood ready to wait upon her lord. He also for her pleasure did what he could; whatever game a child might love, this master gave her. What helped him, too, was that children are so easily won and held. Whatever he could buy, he gave to her: mirrors and ribbands, and, what children love especially, girdles and a dainty ring. With his service he had so far won her, that in secret he would call her his "little bride." How seldom this dear little maid left poor Heinrich alone! He did ever guard her sweetness and her purity. However much her childish charm might merit guerdon, that which endeared her most to him was the sweet soul given her by God's grace.

Her service was ever faithful and tender. Now when poor Heinrich had been living there for three years, and God had not spared his body from racking torment, one day the peasant and his wife, and their sweet daughter, of whom I have already spoken, were sitting together, and bewailing the suffering of their noble lord. They felt that they must mourn; they feared, in truth, one day his death would sore afflict them, mayhap take from them all they owned, and then would come another lord of cruel mien and evil ways. Ofttimes this thought had troubled them, and at last began the husbandman to question his lord:

Said he, "Dear my lord, by your favor, one question I would ask of you. Since there are so many masters of medicine at Salerno, how comes it that not one could give advice for healing your misery? Truly, dear lord, I marvel at this thing!"

Then did poor Heinrich heave a deep sigh from his heart's depths, and with the bitterest pain, and grievous sorrow answered him: "This shame and mockery have I merited from God. Thou didst see how of yore my gate stood open to receive all earthly joys that might come; none of my kindred lived so sumptuously as I; it seemed incredible that I should lack aught I craved. But little did I think upon Him by whose grace this much-desired joy was given me. In my heart I thought as fools do, who desire in their pride that they may enjoy honor and wealth without the grace of God. So was I also led astray by foolish error, and thought little of Him, by whom honor and wealth were vouchsafed unto me. Since such pride greatly angered the divine Doorkeeper, He locked my gate of happiness forever. Alas, my foot shall never enter in; the foolish error of my ways barred it everlastingly. As punishment God hath commanded me to bear a malady from which no man can deliver me. Therefore, the wicked look down upon me, and the virtuous heed me not at all. However evil, he who gazes on my countenance may be yet more horrified, for with contempt he turns his face away. First of all, I value in thee thy steadfast faithfulness; for ill as I am, thou lookest upon me as a guest and dost not flee away. Thou lookest not on me with loathing: well I know, that to none am I dearer than to thee; all thy good wishes are with me; yea, even death wouldst thou patiently suffer for my sake. Who but me in all the world ever suffered greater shame or adversity? Formerly was I thy lord, now am I thy pensioner. Verily, dear friend, thou, and thy wife, and here my little bride will win eternal bliss, for that thou hast cared for me in my affliction. What thou hast asked, I tell thee willingly. In all Salerno was no master to be found, who dared or wished to give me hope. The only means that might restore me to health, was such a thing as none can win on earth. Thus did they say: 'I must win a maid of marriageable age, who is determined to suffer death for me; who will be cut to the heart'; nought else will save me but the heart's blood of such a one. Is it possible, a maid should wish for my sake to suffer death? Therefore must I bear shame and misery, even unto the end. God grant it may be soon!"

Now all that Heinrich told her father, the chaste maid heard. For this tender one was holding in her lap the feet of her dear lord. Truly, like an angel was this tender child. She pondered all his speech until night came, and as was her custom, she lay in her bed by the feet of her father and mother. Then she drew a deep sigh from her heart, and her grief for her poor master's suffering was so great, that a flood of tears burst from her eyes, which, falling on the sleepers' feet, awakened them.

They felt the hot tears flow, awoke, and began to question her, asking what troubled her, yet she forbore to tell them. But when her father spoke with many a threat, then did she answer: "Ye well may mourn with me. What grief can sadden us more than the suffering of our dear lord; disease will slay him, and through his death we lose all our wealth and honor. For nevermore will come so good a lord, who useth us so well as he."

Said they, "Ah daughter, thou speakest sooth, but no help at all will thy great grief and mourning bring; therefore, dear daughter, be silent. We grieve even as much as thou, but, alas, we cannot give him aid. It is God's will; were it another's, our curse would be upon him."

Thus they silenced her, but all night long she pondered, and all day. This thought alone filled her mind till evensong, when all again went to rest. When once more her head lay in its accustomed place, again the flood of tears burst from her eyes, so sore afflicted was she. For deep in her childish soul lay hidden the greatest thought of goodness was ever known to dwell within a child. What other little one has ever done as she? This she determined, that if the next day she awoke, she would lay down her life for her dear lord.

At this thought her spirit became light; she grew carefree and happy; one thought only troubled her: her lord might not agree, and the others might not allow her to do as she had planned.

Then so great became her sorrow that her parents, who lay near, again awoke as on the night before. They said: "Child, what troubleth thee? Thou art a foolish lass to grieve so over that which none can mend. Why dost thou break our sleep?" Then they chided her, saying, "Of what avail is repining, when none can cure or help?" So they hoped to quiet the sweet maid, not dreaming what she had determined on.

Straight answered them the maid: "Even as my lord hath said, he may be made whole again! If ye will give me leave, I may then be his cure. I am the maid, I have the courage; rather than see him perish I will gladly die for him."

At this speech, her parents grew sorrowful and downcast, and the father begged his child to say unto her lord, that she would wish to do this deed for his sake, but could not bring herself to take the step. "Dear daughter, thou art yet a child, and thy fine determination is too hard for thee to carry out; thou canst not accomplish this thing. Thou knowest, thine eyes have never yet gazed upon death. And if thy days were at an end, and death stood there before thee, yet wouldst thou strive to live a little longer, for thou wouldst be put into a frightful hole in the ground. So, be quiet and say no more; if ever from this hour thou breathest another word of this, verily, thy body shall answer for it." So he sought with entreaties and threats to have quieted the maid, but nought had he accomplished, for his daughter made answer:

"Simple as I am, yet from all I have heard, I know full well how

strong and hard death is. But he who also must live long in misery is above all to be pitied. For even though he fights his way, and liveth to old age, in the end he must encounter death, in spite of all. And if he loseth his own soul, then better far had he never been born. I have ever striven to praise God, and willingly do I give my body for eternal life. Think not ill of me; let me do the best I may, both for myself and for the two of you. Only by leaving you forthwith can I preserve you from all harm and grief. Ye have plenty of rich land, and much store through my dear lord's favor, who never spoke an unkind word to you, and hath left unto you all this demesne. All will be well with you while he lives, but if we let him die, then must we perish with him. Him will I save, yea, by this worthy deed. Pray, grant it unto me, for so it must be."

Then spoke her mother, weeping, when she saw how determined her child was: "Bethink thee, dear one, how much toil and travail I have suffered for thy sake: repay me not as thou sayest thou wilt, but otherwise, in better ways. Lest thou shouldst break my heart, spare me this speech. Dost thou not see thou art seeking thy soul's salvation against the will of God? Dost thou not know his commandment? He has bidden thee love and honor thy father and thy mother, and decreed that thus is the soul saved, and long life granted on this earth. Thou utterest the wish to give thy life for our salvation; but thus thou wilt make our lives a burden to us both. That thy father and I cling to life is for thy sake only. Of what avail are life, or wealth, or any earthly pleasure if we lose thee, our beloved one? Lay not this cross upon us. Dearest daughter, thou art marked out to be the joy of our existence, the star of thy kindred, the staff of our old age. If, by thy will, thou makest us stand beside thy grave, surely, then God's favor will be turned from thee. If, dearest daughter, thou dost love us, cease this speech, and forswear this desire, for God's dear love."

"Oh, mother, truly do I honor my father and thee; there is never aught but love and affection in my thoughts. Through your grace do I have my soul and my fair body. All who look upon me, men and women, declare I am the fairest child their eyes have ever beheld. To whom should I give thanks for this save to you both and to God? Therefore shall my thoughts and deeds be ever guided by your desires. Great indeed is my duty! But, mother, since through thee I received both soul and body, allow me now to take them both and withdrawing them from the snares of the devil, dedicate them to God. This life on earth brings only sorrow to my spirit. No earthly desire hath ever touched my soul, nor lust, that leadeth to destruction. For this I give thanks to God, that in my youth He hath given me to know of our earthly life only what is poor and of little account. So will I give myself chaste into the hands of God. For I tremble, lest in growing older, I may take delight in earthly joys, and be caught in their net, and so renounce God's ways. Then would one have reason to mourn that I had lived so long; verily the world is not yet be-

come dear to me. The greatest love it brings is sorrow; I say in truth, its sweet reward is bitter; and a long life, nought but death itself. The only certainty it gives is good to-day and evil to-morrow, and always death in the end; that is but wretched suffering. Not rank, nor wealth nor beauty, strength, nor high courage, not virtue, even, nor honor can protect us from death, more than do humble birth and sin. Life, like our youth, is but a fog, a cloud of dust; our strength trembleth like a leaf. He is a sorry one who strives to catch at this mist, who cannot think upon the truth, and is a slave to the world. For all this filth is covered as with a carpet, and he whom this deceiveth is truly destined for hell, in danger of losing both his soul and his body. Then bethink thee, O blessed woman, of the truth in the mother's heart, and assuage the grief thou feelest for me. Let my father, too, take thought, who wishes for me only what is good. Truly, he has such virtue, that he will soon know how little joy ye could have of me, were I to cling to life. Though I remain unwooed, and dwell with you for two or three years more, none the less, my lord will die, and ye two be in great want, perhaps in such need that ye cannot give me a dowry for a husband; then must I live so wretchedly, that ye would rather see me dead. But of this grief no more; even were my dear lord to remain alive, to see me wed to a man who is rich and worthy, and all come as ye desired, then ye will think all has gone well with me. If I love him, I suffer; if I hate him, 'twill be my death. So shall I always be wretched and filled with trouble, and robbed of my rest, for reasons that women know, taking away their peace of mind and soul. Give me the only treasure that will not depart. A free Husbandman desireth me, who is truly worthy of my body; give me to Him; so let my life be ordered. His plough goeth easily through the earth, His house is well stocked, neither horses nor kine die for Him; no wailing infant breaketh His rest; at His home is neither heat nor cold; none groweth old; the old become young; no frost nor hunger, no sorrow of any kind is there, — only happiness unalloyed, and joy. To Him shall I now go, leaving such poor houses as lightning or hail may lay low, or wave wash away, for which one toils and ever toils. All that a full year's work has barely won, half a day may destroy. Such treasure, such a country will I leave: they shall be cursed and spurned by me. Ye love me: that is beautiful. Therefore, I see with joy, that ye will not treat me as though ye loved me not. If the spirit moves you, and it is given you to understand, and you desire for me virtue and honor, then let me turn to our Lord, Jesus Christ, whose goodness endureth forever, and who loveth the poor maid, as He loveth a queen. Never can I pay my debt for this deed of grace, save by God's help. Surely, it is His command that I remain obedient to you both from whom I have my being. But I shall not be untrue to myself. Oft have I heard it spoken, that whoever consoleth his neighbor in his affliction, crowneth that neighbor and humbleth himself; such a man hath true

faith. But that I may be faithful unto you, I must first be faithful unto myself. If ye wish to stand in the way of my salvation, then I must leave ye to your tears to weep for me; for never would I seem at fault. Unceasingly I long to go where I shall find eternal joy. Ye have other children: let them be thy joy, and solace ye for my death. For none can stay me from saving my dear lord and myself. Oh, mother, often have I heard thee lament and say how it would rend thy heart to stand beside my grave. That shall not happen to thee. Thou shalt not see my grave; for my death shall come where none of ye shall see, it shall be at Salerno. There death shall deliver us all from the fiend of hell, the evil one. Through my death shall we all gain reward, I more than any of you."

When they saw their child eager to embrace death, and heard her speak so wisely, in her desire to break all earthly bonds, they began seriously to consider, that never could such wisdom show itself on the lips of a child. They said to themselves, "She hath been inspired by the Holy Ghost, who also entered St. Nicholas as he lay in his cradle, and taught him wisdom, so that he commended to God his child's soul." Then in their goodness, they determined not to dissuade her, nor keep her from what she had planned to undertake, feeling that her wish had come from God. Their bodies rigid with grief, the peasant and his wife sat by the child's bedside, and through love of her they said nothing, lost in thought for a time. Neither the one nor the other could say a word. The mother was wholly broken by her grief. So sat they all sad and downcast, until they thought "What boots it to grieve? grief will not move her resolution, and if we show displeasure in our speech, mayhap our dear lord will not then be helped." Whereupon both readily declared their willingness.

This rendered the chaste maid happy, and scarcely had the dawn broken, when she went to her dear lord's bedside. His little bride called to him, saying,

"Dear my lord, art thou asleep?"

"Nay, little bride, tell me what hath awakened thee so early?"

"My lord, I am torn by grief and anguish over thy sorry plight."

"Oh, little bride, if thou takest it so to heart, then art thou showing much good unto me, for which God requite thee, but nought can prevail against my misery."

"Take comfort, dear lord, for good tidings await thee. Since it hath chanced there may be help for thee, I shall not wait another day. Dear lord, didst thou not tell us, if thou couldst find a chaste maid, who for thy sake would suffer death, thou wouldst be whole? That maid — God knows — am I; thy life is of much greater worth than mine."

Thereupon the lord thanked her heartily for her good will; his eyes began to fill with silent tears. Said he: "My little bride, death is in sooth no little thing, as thou knowest. Most fully hast thou shown that if thou couldst, thou wouldst help me. I know thy loving valor, thy purpose,

which is pure and good: more than this I will not ask of thee. Thou canst never bestow upon me that which thou hast offered. The faithfulness thou hast conceived for me, God in His goodness will requite. I should become a mockery to mankind, were I now to prepare medicine for myself, and no good would come of it after all. Dear little bride, thou speakest as children do who are always wilful; whatever cometh into their minds, evil or good, they wish immediately, but repentance follows after. Little bride, however thou mayest feel, thy speech springs from an impetuous desire. If one were to take thee at thy word, if thy offer should be accepted, how soon wouldst thou rue it!" And that she might consider it still further, he went on to say: "Thy father and mother can ill spare thee; never will I bring grief upon those who have always done good unto me. Do thou, dear bride, heed whatever they may counsel." He spoke this with a laugh, for little did he suspect how all would befall.

Thus did he beseech the good maid. But her father and mother said to him: "Dear lord, always hast thou loved and honored us greatly; we should be doing a great wrong, if we failed to requite thy goodness. Our daughter is determined to die for thy sake; with reverent joy, we permit her to do this. For this is the third day that she hath importuned us. We have granted her wish and she hath won our leave. Let God through her effect a cure upon thee: for thy sake, will we give her up."

When his little bride thus offered to release him from illness through her death, and showed her earnestness, great was his sorrow and mourning. Then sundry causes of grief laid hold upon all three, as well as upon the Lord Heinrich. The father and mother could not restrain their tears, thinking upon their dear child's death. Hereafter the lord bethought him of the dear child's tender care, so that great anguish and regret seized upon him. He wept bitterly, thinking he had done better to let all stand as it was before. The maiden, too, wept, fearing that he had lost courage. So all were deeply moved, and no word of thanks could be spoken.

At last their liege lord, poor Heinrich, began to thank all three for their fidelity and kindness. The maid was happy once more because he took her counsel.

Swiftly he prepared to leave for Salerno, making ready all that was needful for the journey. Whatever a maiden might need was prepared for her: a handsome steed, a rich dress — one she had never worn before — all made of ermine and of velvet, and the best cloak that could be found. Such was the maiden's raiment.

Who can describe in words their grief and lamentation, the mother's stark despair, the father's sorrow? Between the two, it was a most pitiful farewell, when they sent away their child, blooming with health, to her death; never to see her again. Their only solace was the pure goodness of their hearts, from which the feeling sprang that led the young child to take death upon herself. With no effort on her part, all grief and heaviness

were purged from her spirit; else would it have been a miracle that their hearts did not break. Their misery was changed into joy, so that hereafter they suffered no more pain for their child's death.

So the maid with happy spirit rode to Salerno with her lord. What could disturb her soul, save that the road was long, and she still lived? And when the Lord Heinrich brought her to the master's house, and it was straightway announced that he had brought with him a maid, whom he called his victim, straight was she brought before the master.

To him it seemed incredible. "Child," he said, "hast thou well considered the intent? Hast thou perhaps been moved to it through the prayers and threats of the master?" But the maid, answered that she herself had so determined, and did it of her own free will.

Thereat was he much astounded, took her aside, and adjured her to tell whether her lord had threatened her, that she should speak thus. Said he: "My child, there is great need that thou shouldst well consider. I shall speak plainly. If thou sufferest death, and do it not freely, then is your youthful body dead, in very truth. But it will not help, nay, not one jot. Seek not to hide thy thoughts from me: I tell thee truly what I must do: I must bind thee, hand and foot, and if thou hast pity on thy body, think of thy suffering. I shall cut thee to the heart, and take it from thy living flesh. Now, maiden, tell me, is thy courage steadfast? No child has yet been made to suffer as thou must now suffer at my hands. A great fear assails me, that I must now perform and look upon this deed. Bethink thee truly, art thou not afraid? If thou dost regret but one hair's breadth, then my labor and time are lost, and alas, thy body too."

And again most earnestly did he urge her that if she felt herself not steadfast as rock to relinquish her purpose.

But smiling answered the maiden that well she knew all this: on this very day was death to release her from all earthly care:

"God reward you, noble Sir, for having so clearly spoken the truth to me. In sooth, I am a little fearful, for one doubt has arisen in my mind. I will tell it frankly to you, how this doubt hath entered into me. I fear our time and effort will be lost by thy timidity, for womanish is thy speech; it maketh thee seem a brother to the timid hare. Thy fear that I must die is far too great. Truly thou art not acting as beseems thy high office as master. I am a woman, yet have I strength. If thou hast the courage to cut my breast, I have the strength to bear it. In sooth, the dreadful thing thou hast just described, I have rightly understood, and would not have come hither, had I not known myself to be of steadfast courage for the trial, and sure that I can bear it well. I feel here in thy honorable presence, my pallor has quite left me, and a firm resolve entered in. I stand here, as if to go to a ball, since there is no torment so great, that will not end in a day, together with my body. I feel, indeed, one day is cheaply given to win eternal life, which never can be lost.

No more will I be moved in my purpose. If thou art sure that thou canst give health unto my dear lord, and bring me everlasting life, then I pray God thou mayest do it in time, and prove thyself a master indeed. The thought invites me greatly, I know for whose sake I do this, and in whose name it is about to be. One who recognizes difficult service, and lets it not pass without its due reward. I well know that He himself hath said 'Whoever does great service, he shall have great reward.' Therefore will I consider death only a sweet necessity to earn a sure reward. If I should fail to seek this heavenly crown, I should be as the foolish, since I am but of humble birth."

When he had seen her strength, arising from her blameless state, he led her again to the sick man, and said to her lord:

"No more the thought can trouble us, that thy maid is not perfect in all things. Therefore, be of good cheer, I shall soon make thee whole once more."

Straightway did he lead the maid into his secret chamber, because then her lord could not see; he locked the door, and drew the bolt, for he was unwilling that the lord should see how her end must come.

In the chamber, where various medicaments were prepared, he bade the damsel cast off her dress. She was much delighted at his behest; tore her vesture at the seam; and stood forth stripped of all clothing.

When the master gazed upon her, he said in his heart, "So fair a creature seldom liveth on earth." So greatly did he pity her, his soul and spirit well nigh weakened. And now did the good maid spy a high table standing there, and upon this he bade her climb. To the table he bound her fast, and took into his hand a great sharp knife that lay close by, which he was used to employ for such purpose. Though it was long and broad, it had not so sharp an edge as he could have wished. Since she might not live longer, he pitied her, and wished he could give her an easy death.

Now there lay near her a good whetstone. On this he began to rub the knife very slowly and deliberately, in order to sharpen it. The sound of this poor Heinrich heard; he quickly came nearer and stood hard by the wall, for greatly did it tear his heart to think he should no more see the maid alive. And so did he begin to seek for some open place, until he found a little hole, that pierced the wall, and through this he spied her there, naked and bound to the table.

Then he made a new resolve — for he did not think good what he had before determined, and changed his plan. His spirit was seized suddenly with compassion.

For when he saw the maiden brought to such a pass, to himself he said: "How foolish is thy planning; at the best, thou shalt win but a day of life away from Him whom none may withstand. Thou dost know what thou art about; since thou must some day die, it is meet for thee to bear

submissively this shameful existence God hath laid upon thee. Hast thou then duly pondered, whether this child's death will heal thee? What our dear Lord hath put upon thee, bear it with all fortitude; I cannot allow this dear child's death."

Straightway he went up to the door, and began to beat upon it, begging to be admitted. The master spoke deliberately: "I have no time now to open the door for thee."

"Nay, master, hear me speak."

"Forgive me, sir, I cannot. Be patient until this is over."

"Nay, verily, hear me before it is too late."

"Then speak it through the wall."

"Nay, that will not serve."

Soon was he in the room, Then Heinrich went to where he saw the poor maid bound, and spoke thus to the master: "This child is so lovely, in sooth, I may not look upon her death. According to God's will, let me remain as I am. We must bid her arise. The silver I have promised thee for this will I freely give to thee. Only, I beseech thee, let this maiden live."

Now when the maiden perceived that she was not to die, her soul was sore oppressed. She minded neither precept nor propriety, but beat her body and tore her hair, until her appearance was so wretched, that none could look upon her without shedding tears. And bitterly she moaned: "Alas, woe unto me, most wretched one. Alas, once more! What will now be my lot? Must I thus lose my rich heavenly crown, that was to be given me as reward for all my suffering? Then am I lost indeed! Alas, O powerful Christ, what honor hath been taken from my lord, as well as from me! Now must we both renounce the honor that was destined for us. Had this been carried out, then would his body have been saved, and I should have won life everlasting."

So begged she passionately for death. However great her pleading, she spent it all in vain. Since none would do aught for her, she began to chide, saying, "I must pay for my lord's weakness. Men have deceived and misled me; that I now clearly see. I always heard it said abroad that thou wert honorable and good, possessing a firm manly courage. That was, God help me! a fabric of lies. The world was much deceived in thee. Thou hast ever belonged, and still belong to those who are afraid. I can easily see that. For I was willing to suffer that which thou wouldst not permit. Oh, sir, by what right didst thou become afraid, when I was bound? Was there not a thick wall 'twixt thee and me? My lord, dost thou not trust thyself to see another's death? So will I announce, and proclaim to all, that none will do aught for thee, save what is to thy benefit."

However much she cursed and begged, and chided all was of no avail; she had to live in spite of it. Whatever chiding there befell, poor Heinrich bore it all, virtuously and well, as a good knight should, in whom no chivalrous courtesy is lacking. When now the miserable hero had dressed

his maid once more, and paid the doctor a fee for his services, he set forth again, back to his own country; albeit he well knew, that as soon as he reached home from every mouth curses and jeers would fall upon him. This he confided only to God alone.

Now the good maid had wept and wailed so greatly that she seemed on the point of death. Then did the Searcher of all hearts behold her great faith and her grief, He to whom no heart is ever locked. Since He with loving deception had inflicted this upon them both, seeking thus to try them; and just as to Job, the rich, so now the loving Christ showed how dear unto Him is such faithfulness, and straightway relieved them of all their grief, and in the selfsame hour made him clean, and healed him of his leprosy.

So now the good Lord Heinrich began to recover so quickly, that on his homeward journey, through God's care, he was completely cleansed, and so full of health, that he looked as he had looked twenty years before. And since for this grace they were filled with joy, he commanded that his good fortune be announced at home in his own country, that all with grateful hearts might rejoice in his good fortune. It was right and fitting that all should feel delight in such favor as the Lord God had bestowed upon him.

All his dearest friends, as soon as they heard of his arrival, rode to meet him three days' journey in order to receive him well. They would believe no evidence, save what their own eyes showed them. They saw the miracle of God made manifest in his clean body. The peasant and his wife, ye may well believe, tarried not at home. Forever will remain untold the joy that they experienced, when God vouchsafed them such a happy sight: their daughter and their lord. Never was greater joy than that bestowed upon these parents, when they saw both their loved ones safe and well. They scarce knew how to act; their happy greeting was accompanied by strange demeanor. So great was their hearts' delight, that while they laughed, the tears gushed from their eyes; and we need not deny, that on her rosy mouth they kissed the maid, three times within the hour.

The Swabians now welcomed them with most costly gifts. This was their perfect greeting, God knows it well, for Swabia must admit to every worthy man who has seen them at home, that none there was of better cheer. How all received him on his homeward way, how things went afterwards, what more is there to tell? For richer than of yore did he become in land and honor. He began to prepare everything for the perpetual service of his God, and was much more obedient to His word than ever he had been of yore. So there remains for him eternal fame.

The peasant and his wife earned honor and substance at his hands. He never showed himself ungrateful, so nobly had they stood by him. He gave them for their own the great demesne, both land and serfs, where he had once lain, a sick man. And his little bride he provided with

goods and all manner of things, as though she were his mistress, or his cousin. Duty demanded this.

Now all the wise began to recommend and counsel him to think of marriage; but not unanimous was this counsel. He answered them, that he would send for all his friends, and settle finally this matter to which they advised. So from all sides he summoned the host of those who waited on his commands. When all were come before him, friends and clients, too, he made known his desire. From each came the same answer: it was right, and time that he should marry. Thereupon began a great discussion. The one said this, the other that, as men are wont to do when bidden to give counsel.

Since their advice did not agree at all, poor Heinrich said at last: "Ye all know well, that but a short time since, I was in great discomfort, an object of disgust in the eyes of all men. Now neither man nor woman shuns me, I have a healthy body, through our Lord's grace. For this ye all advise that I render thanks unto our God, from whom I have received this sign of grace — that I once more am whole." And they said: "Take such resolve, that thy body, and thy riches, too, may ever be awaiting His commands." His little bride stood at his side, on whom he looked with loving eyes. Embracing her, he said:

"Let it be known unto all, that through this good maid it hath come about that I can walk abroad a healthy man; through this maid, standing now by my side. Now is she free as I am, wherefore do I greatly long to take her as my wife. God grant, I shall not be ashamed of this, then will I call her wife, in very truth. If this cannot be done, then verily, I die without a wife, since I do owe, to her alone, my life and honor. By our Lord's grace, I beg all to be well pleased with my resolve."

Then did all agree, poor and rich, that he might do this with every right. Of priests were there enough, I wot, to give the maid to him in marriage.

After a long life, blessed with joy, they were taken up together into the Eternal Kingdom. May such befall us all upon the Judgment Day.

To the reward they reapèd then,
May God in Heav'n help us! Amen.

ADALBERT VON CHAMISSO

(1781–1838)

Louis Charles Adelaide — later known as Adalbert von Chamisso — was born in Champagne in 1781. He was of French descent. At an early age he went to Germany and in 1798 became an officer in the Prussian Army. Eight years later he resigned and took up the study of botany and zoölogy. Although he wrote some distinguished poetry, he is universally known and still read as the author of *Peter Schlemihl*, a romantic masterpiece, in which many have tried to discover hidden meanings and allegories. But the novel lives because it is primarily a well-told and interesting yarn. It was written in 1813, and published the next year.

The translation here used is by an anonymous writer, and reprinted from F. H. Hedge's *Prose Writers of Germany*, Philadelphia, 1847. The original title is *The Marvelous History of Peter Schlemihl.*

PETER SCHLEMIHL

Chapter I

AFTER a fortunate, but for me very troublesome voyage, we finally reached the port. The instant that I touched land in the port. I loaded myself with my few effects, and passing through the swarming people, I entered the first, and least house, before which I saw a sign hang. I requested a room; the boots measured me with a look, and conducted me into the garret. I caused fresh water to be brought, and made him exactly describe to me where I should find Mr. Thomas John.

"Before the north-gate; the first country-house on the right hand; a large new house of red and white marble, with many columns."

"Good." It was still early in the day. I opened at once my bundle; took hence my new black cloth coat; clad myself cleanly in my best apparel; put my letter of introduction into my pocket, and set out on the way to the man who was to promote my modest expectations.

When I had ascended the long North Street, and reached the gate, I soon saw the pillars glimmer through the foliage. "Here it is then," thought I. I wiped the dust from my feet with my pocket-handkerchief; put my neckcloth in order, and in God's name rung the bell. The door flew open. In the hall I had an examination to undergo; the porter, however, permitted me to be announced, and I had the honor to be called into the park, where Mr. John was walking with a select party. I recognized

the man at once by the lustre of his corpulent self-complacency. He received me very well — as a rich man receives a poor devil, — even turned towards me, without turning from the rest of the company, and took the offered letter from my hand. "So, so, from my brother. I have heard nothing from him for a long time. But he is well? There," continued he, addressing the company, without waiting for an answer, and pointing with the letter to a hill, "there I am going to erect the new building." He broke the seal without breaking off the conversation, which turned upon riches.

"He that is not master of a million, at least," he observed, "is — pardon me the word — a wretch!"

"O! how true!" I exclaimed with a rush of overflowing feeling.

That pleased him. He smiled at me, and said — "Stay here, my good friend; in a while I shall perhaps have time to tell you what I think about this." He pointed to the letter, which he then thrust into his pocket, and turned again to the company. He offered his arm to a young lady; the other gentlemen addressed themselves to other fair ones; each found what suited him; and all proceeded towards the rose-blossomed mount.

I slid into the rear, without troubling any one, for no one troubled himself any further about me. The company was excessively lively; there was dalliance and playfulness; trifles were sometimes discussed with an important tone, but oftener important matters with levity; and especially pleasantly flew the wit over absent friends and their circumstances. I was too strange to understand much of all this; too anxious and introverted to take an interest in such riddles.

We had reached the rosary. The lovely Fanny, the belle of the day, as it appeared, would, out of obstinacy, herself break off a blooming bough. She wounded herself on a thorn, and as if from the dark roses, flowed the purple on her tender hand. This circumstance put the whole party into a flutter. English plaster was sought for. A still, thin, lanky, longish old man, who stood near, and whom I had not hitherto remarked, put his hand instantly into the close-lying breast-pocket of his old French gray taffeta coat; produced thence a little pocket-book; opened it; and presented to the lady, with a profound obeisance, the required article. She took it without noticing the giver, and without thanks; the wound was bound up; and we went forward over the hill, from whose back the company could enjoy the wide prospect over the green labyrinth of the park to the boundless ocean.

The view was in reality vast and splendid. A light point appeared on the horizon between the dark flood, and the blue of the heaven. "A telescope here!" cried John; and already before the servants who appeared at the call, were in motion, the gray man, modestly bowing, had thrust his hand into his coat-pocket, and drawn thence a beautiful Dollond, and handed it to Mr. John. Bringing it immediately to his eye, he informed the company that it was the ship which went out yesterday, and was detained in view of port by contrary winds. The telescope passed from hand to

hand, but not again into that of its owner. I, however, gazed in wonder at the man, and could not conceive how the great machine had come out of the narrow pocket: but this seemed to have struck no one else, and nobody troubled himself any farther about the gray man than about myself.

Refreshments were handed round; the choicest fruits of every zone, in the costliest vessels. Mr. John did the honors with an easy grace, and a second time addressed a word to me. "Help yourself; you have not had the like at sea." I bowed, but he saw it not, he was already speaking with some one else.

The company would fain have reclined upon the sward on the slope of the hill, opposite to the outstretched landscape, had they not feared the dampness of the earth. "It were divine," observed one of the party, "had we but a Turkey carpet to spread here." The wish was scarcely expressed when the man in the gray coat had his hand in his pocket, and was busied in drawing thence, with a modest and even humble deportment, a rich Turkey carpet interwoven with gold. The servants received it as a matter of course, and opened it on the required spot. The company without ceremony, took their places upon it; for myself, I looked again in amazement on the man; at the carpet, which measured above twenty paces long and ten in breadth; and rubbed my eyes, not knowing what to think of it, especially as nobody saw anything extraordinary in it.

I would fain have had some explanation regarding the man, and have asked who he was, but I knew not to whom to address myself, for I was almost more afraid of the gentlemen's servants than of the served gentlemen. At length I took courage, and stepped up to a young man who appeared to me to be of less consideration than the rest, and who had often stood alone. I begged him softly to tell me who the agreeable man in the gray coat there was.

"He there, who looks like an end of thread that has escaped out of a tailor's needle?"

"Yes, he who stands alone."

"I don't know him," he replied, and as it seemed in order to avoid a longer conversation with me, he turned away, and spoke of indifferent matters to another.

The sun began now to shine more powerfully, and to inconvenience the ladies. The lovely Fanny addressed carelessly to the gray man, whom as far as I am aware, no one had yet spoken to, the trifling question, "Whether he had not, perchance, also a tent by him?" — He answered her by an obeisance most profound, as if an unmerited honor were done him, and had already his hand in his pocket, out of which I saw come canvass, poles, cordage, iron-work, in short, everything which belongs to the most splendid pleasure-tent. The young gentlemen helped to expand it, and it covered the whole extent of the carpet, and nobody found anything remarkable in it.

I was already become uneasy, nay horrified at heart, but how completely so, as, at the very next wish expressed, I saw him yet pull out of his pocket three roadsters — I tell thee three beautiful great black horses, with saddle and caparison. Bethink thee! for God's sake! — three saddled horses, still out of the same pocket out of which already a pocket-book, a telescope, an embroidered carpet, twenty paces long and ten broad, a pleasure-tent of equal dimensions, and all the requisite poles and irons, had come forth! If I did not protest to you that I saw it myself with my own eyes, you could not possibly believe it.

Embarrassed and obsequious as the man himself appeared to be, little as was the attention which had been bestowed upon him, yet to me his grisley aspect, from which I could not turn my eyes, became so fearful, that I could bear it no longer.

I resolved to steal away from the company, which from the insignificant part I played in it seemed to me an easy affair. I proposed to myself to return to the city, to try my luck again on the morrow with Mr. John, and if I could muster the necessary courage, to question him about the singular gray man. Had I only had the good fortune to escape so well!

I had already actually succeeded in stealing through the rosary, and in descending the hill, found myself on a piece of lawn, when fearing to be encountered in crossing the grass out of the path, I cast an enquiring glance round me. What was my terror to behold the man in the gray coat behind me, and making towards me! In the next moment he took off his hat before me, and bowed so low as no one had ever yet done to me. There was no doubt but that he wished to address me, and without being rude, I could not prevent it. I also took off my hat; bowed also; and stood there in the sun with bare head as if rooted to the ground. I stared at him full of terror, and was like a bird which a serpent has fascinated. He himself appeared very much embarrassed. He raised not his eyes; again bowed repeatedly; drew nearer, and addressed me with a soft, tremulous voice, almost in a tone of supplication.

"May I hope, sir, that you will pardon my boldness in venturing in so unusual manner to approach you, but I would ask a favor. Permit me most condescendingly —"

"But in God's name!" exclaimed I in my trepidation, "what can I do for a man who —" we both started, and, as I believe, reddened.

After a moment's silence, he again resumed: "During the short time that I had the happiness to find myself near you, I have, sir, many times, — allow me to say it to you — really contemplated with inexpressible admiration, the beautiful, beautiful shadow which, as it were, with a certain noble disdain, and without yourself remarking it, you cast from you in the sunshine. The noble shadow at your feet there. Pardon me the bold supposition, but possibly you might not be indisposed to make this shadow over to me."

I was silent, and a mill-wheel seemed to whirl round in my head. What was I to make of this singular proposition to sell my own shadow? He must be mad, thought I, and with an altered tone which was more assimilated to that of his own humility, I answered thus:

"Ha! ha! good friend, have not you then enough of your own shadow? I take this for a business of a very singular sort —"

He hastily interrupted me: — "I have many things in my pocket which, sir, might not appear worthless to you, and for this inestimable shadow I hold the very highest price too small."

It struck cold through me again as I was reminded of the pocket. I knew not how I could have called him good friend. I resumed the conversation, and sought, if possible, to set all right again by excessive politeness.

"But, sir, pardon your most humble servant; I do not understand your meaning. How indeed could my shadow" — He interrupted me —

"I beg your permission only here on the spot to be allowed to take up this noble shadow and put it in my pocket; how I shall do that be my care. On the other hand, as a testimony of my grateful acknowledgment to you, I give you the choice of all the treasures which I carry in my pocket, — the genuine Spring-root, the Mandrake-root, the Change-penny, the Rob-dollar, the napkin of Roland's Page, a mandrake-man, at your own price. But these probably don't interest you, — rather Fortunatus's Wishing-cap newly and stoutly repaired, and a lucky-bag such as he had!"

"The Luck-purse of Fortunatus!" I exclaimed, interrupting him; and great as my anxiety was, with that one word he had taken my whole mind captive. A dizziness seized me, and double ducats seemed to glitter before my eyes.

"Honored Sir, will you do me the favor to view, and to make trial of this purse?" He thrust his hand into his pocket, and drew out a tolerably large, well-sewed purse of stout Cordovan leather, with two strong strings, and handed it to me. I plunged my hand into it, and drew out ten gold pieces, and again ten, and again ten, and again ten. I extended him eagerly my hand — "Agreed! the business is done; for the purse you have my shadow!"

He closed with me; kneeled instantly down before me, and I beheld him, with an admirable dexterity, gently loosen my shadow from top to toe from the grass, lift it up, roll it together, fold it, and finally, pocket it. He arose, made me another obeisance, and retreated towards the rosary. I fancied that I heard him there softly laughing to himself; but I held the purse fast by the strings; all round me lay the clear sunshine, and within me was yet no power of reflection.

Chapter II

At length I came to myself, and hastened to quit the place where I had nothing more to expect. In the first place I filled my pockets with gold; then I secured the strings of the purse fast round my neck, and concealed the purse itself in my bosom. I passed unobserved out of the park, reached the highway and took the road to the city. As, sunk in thought, I approached the gate, I heard a cry behind me.

"Young gentleman! eh! young gentleman! hear you!"

I looked round, an old woman called after me.

"Do take care, sir, you have lost your shadow!"

"Thank you, good mother!" I threw her a gold piece for her well-meant intelligence, and stopped under the trees.

At the city gate I was compelled to hear again from the sentinel — "Where has the gentleman left his shadow?" And immediately again from some women — "Jesus Maria! the poor fellow has no shadow!" That began to irritate me, and I became especially careful not to walk in the sun. This could not, however, be accomplished everywhere, for instance, over the broad street which I next must approach actually, as mischief would have it, at the very moment that the boys came out of school. A cursed hunchbacked rogue, I see him yet, spied out instantly that I had no shadow. He proclaimed the fact with a loud outcry to the whole assembled literary street youth of the suburb, who began forthwith to criticize me, and to pelt me with mud. "Decent people are accustomed to take their shadow with them, when they go into the sunshine." To defend myself from them I threw whole handfuls of gold amongst them and sprang into a hackney-coach, which some compassionate soul procured for me.

As soon as I found myself alone in the rolling carriage I began to weep bitterly. The presentiment must already have arisen in me, that far as gold on earth transcends in estimation, merit and virtue, so much higher than gold itself is the shadow valued; and as I had earlier sacrificed wealth to conscience, I had now thrown away the shadow for mere gold. What in the world could and would become of me!

I was again greatly annoyed as the carriage stopped before my old inn. I was horrified at the bare idea of entering that wretched cockloft. I ordered my things to be brought down; received my miserable bundle with contempt, threw down some gold pieces, and ordered the coachman to drive to the most fashionable hotel. The house faced the north, and I had not the sun to fear. I dismissed the driver with gold; caused the best front rooms to be assigned me, and shut myself up in them as quickly as I could!

What think you I now began? Oh, my dear Chamisso, to confess it even to you makes me blush. I drew the unlucky purse from my bosom, and with a kind of desperation which, like a rushing conflagration, grew in me

with self-increasing growth. I extracted gold, and gold, and gold, and ever more gold, and strewed it on the floor, and strode amongst it, and made it ring again, and feeding my poor heart on the splendor and the sound, flung continually more metal to metal, till in my weariness, I sank down on the rich heap, and rioting thereon, rolled and revelled amongst it. So passed the day, the evening. I opened not my door; night and day found me lying on my gold, and then sleep overcame me.

I dreamed of you. I seemed to stand behind the glass-door of your little room, and to see you sitting then at your work-table, between a skeleton and a bundle of dried plants. Before you lay open Haller, Humboldt, and Linnæus; on your sofa a volume of Goethe and "The Magic-Ring." I regarded you long, and every thing in your room, and then you again. You did not move, you drew no breath; — you were dead!

I awoke. It appeared still to be very early. My watch stood. I was sore all over; thirsty and hungry too; I had taken nothing since the evening before. I pushed from me with loathing and indignation the gold on which I had before sated my foolish heart. In my vexation I knew not what I should do with it. It must not lie there. I tried whether the purse would swallow it again, — but no! None of my windows opened upon the sea. I found myself compelled laboriously to drag it to a great cupboard which stood in a cabinet, and there to pile it. I left only some handfuls of it lying. When I had finished the work, I threw myself exhausted into an easy chair, and waited for the stirring of the people in the house. As soon as possible I ordered food to be brought, and the landlord to come to me.

I fixed in consultation with this man the future arrangements of my house. He recommended for the services about my person a certain Bendel, whose honest and intelligent physiognomy immediately captivated me. He it was whose attachment has since accompanied me consolingly through the wretchedness of life, and has helped me to support my gloomy lot. I spent the whole day in my room among masterless servants, shoemakers, tailors, and tradespeople. I fitted myself out, and purchased besides a great many jewels and valuables for the sake of getting rid of some of the vast heap of hoarded up gold; but it seemed to me as if it were impossible to diminish it.

In the meantime I brooded over my situation in the most agonizing despair. I dared not venture a step out of my doors, and at evening I caused forty waxlights to be lit in my room before I issued from the shade. I thought with horror on the terrible scene with the schoolboys, yet I resolved, much courage as it demanded, once more to make a trial of public opinion. The nights were then moonlight. Late in the evening I threw on a wide cloak, pressed my hat over my eyes, and stole, trembling like a criminal, out of the house. I stepped first out of the shade in whose protection I had arrived there, in a remote square, into the full moonlight, determined to learn my fate out of the mouths of the passers-by.

Spare me, dear friend, the painful repetition of all that I had to endure. The women often testified the deepest compassion with which I inspired them, declarations which no less transpierced me than the mockery of the youth and the proud contempt of the men, especially of those fat, well-fed fellows, who themselves cast a broad shadow. A lovely and sweet girl, who, as it seemed, accompanied her parents, while these suspiciously only looked before their feet, turned by chance her flashing eyes upon me. She was obviously terrified; she observed my want of a shadow, let fall her veil over her beautiful countenance, and dropping her head, passed in silence.

I could bear it no longer. Briny streams started from my eyes, and, cut to the heart, I staggered back into the shade. I was obliged to support myself against the houses to steady my steps and wearily and late reached my dwelling.

I spent a sleepless night. The next morning it was my first care to have the man in the gray coat everywhere sought after. Possibly I might succeed in finding him again, and how joyful! if he repented of the foolish bargain as heartily as I did. I ordered Bendel to come to me, he appeared to possess address and tact; I described to him exactly the man in whose possession lay a treasure without which my life was only a misery. I told him the time, the place in which I had seen him; I described to him all who had been present, and added, moreover, this token: he should particularly inquire after a Dollond's telescope; after a gold interwoven Turkish carpet; after a splendid pleasure tent; and, finally, after the black chargers, whose story, we knew not how, was connected with that of the mysterious man, who seemed of no consideration amongst them, and whose appearance had destroyed the quiet and happiness of my life.

When I had done speaking I fetched out gold, such a load that I was scarcely able to carry it, and laid upon it precious stones and jewels of a far greater value. "Bendel," said I, "these level many ways, and make easy many things which appeared quite impossible; don't be stingy with it, as I am not, but go and rejoice your master with the intelligence on which his only hope depends."

He went. He returned late and sorrowful. None of the people of Mr. John, none of his guests, and he had spoken with all, were able in the remotest degree, to recollect the man in the gray coat. The new telescope was there, and no one knew whence it had come; the carpet, the tent were still there spread and pitched on the self-same hill; the servants boasted of the affluence of their master, and no one knew whence these same valuables had come to him. He himself took his pleasure in them, and did not trouble himself because he did not know whence he had them. The young gentlemen had the horses, which they had ridden, in their stables, and they praised the liberality of Mr. John who on that day made them a present of them. Thus much was clear from the circumstantial relation

of Bendel, whose active zeal and able proceeding, although with such fruitless result, received from me their merited commendation. I gloomily motioned him to leave me alone.

"I have," began he again, "given my master an account of the matter which was most important to him. I have yet a message to deliver which a person gave me whom I met at the door as I went out on the business in which I have been so unfortunate. The very words of the man were these: 'Tell Mr. Peter Schlemihl he will not see me here again as I am going over sea, and a favorable wind calls me at this moment to the harbor. But in a year and a day I will have the honor to seek him myself, and then to propose to him another and probably to him more agreeable transaction. Present my most humble compliments to him, and assure him of my thanks.' I asked him who he was, but he replied, your honor knew him already."

"What was the man's appearance?" cried I, filled with foreboding, and Bendel sketched me the man in the gray coat, trait by trait, word for word, as he had accurately described in his former relation the man after whom he had inquired.

"Unhappy one!" I exclaimed, wringing my hands, — "that was the very man!" and there fell, as it were, scales from his eyes.

"Yes! it was he, it was positively!" cried he in horror, "and I, blind and imbecile wretch have not recognized him, have not recognized him, and have betrayed my master!"

He broke out into violent weeping; heaped the bitterest reproaches on himself, and the despair in which he was inspired even me with compassion. I spoke comfort to him, assured him repeatedly that I entertained not the slightest doubt of his fidelity, and sent him instantly to the port, if possible to follow the traces of this singular man. But in the morning a great number of ships which the contrary winds had detained in the harbor, had run out, bound to different climes and different shores, and the gray man had vanished as tracelessly as a dream.

Chapter III

Of what avail are wings to him who is fast bound in iron fetters? He is compelled only the more fearfully to despair. I lay like Fafnir by his treasure far from every consolation, suffering much in the midst of my gold. But my heart was not in it, on the contrary, I cursed it, because I saw myself through it cut off from all life. Brooding over my gloomy secret alone, I trembled before the meanest of my servants, whom at the same time I was forced to envy, for he had a shadow; he might show himself in the sun. I wore away days and nights in solitary sorrow in my chamber, and anguish gnawed at my heart.

There was another who pined away before my eyes; my faithful Bendel

never ceased to torture himself with silent reproaches, that he had betrayed the trust reposed in him by his master, and had not recognized him after whom he was despatched, and with whom he must believe that my sorrowful fate was intimately interwoven. I could not lay the fault to his charge; I recognized in the event the mysterious nature of the Unknown.

That I might leave nothing untried, I one time sent Bendel with a valuable brilliant ring to the most celebrated painter of the city, and begged that he would pay me a visit. He came. I ordered my people to retire, closed the door, seated myself by the man, and after I had praised his art, I came with a heavy heart to the business, causing him before that to promise the strictest secrecy.

"Mr. Professor," said I, "could not you, think you, paint a false shadow for one, who by the most unlucky chance in the world, has become deprived of his own?"

"You mean a personal shadow?"

"That is precisely my meaning" —

"But," continued he, "through what awkwardness, through what negligence could he then lose his proper shadow?"

"How it happened," replied I, "is now of very little consequence, but thus far I may say," added I, lying shamelessly to him, "in Russia, whither he made a journey last winter, in an extraordinary cold his shadow froze so fast to the ground that he could by no means loose it again."

"The false shadow that I could paint him," replied the professor, "would only be such a one as by the slightest agitation he might lose again, especially a person, who, as appears by your relation, has so little adhesion to his own native shadow. He who has no shadow, let him keep out of the sunshine, that is the safest and most sensible thing for him." He arose and withdrew, casting at me a transpiercing glance which mine could not support. I sunk back in my seat, and covered my face with my hands.

Thus Bendel found me, as he at length entered. He saw the grief of his master, and was desirous silently and reverently to withdraw. I looked up, I lay under the burden of my trouble; I must communicate it.

"Bendel!" cried I, "Bendel, you only one who see my affliction and respect it, seeking not to pry into it, but appearing silently and kindly to sympathize, come to me, Bendel, and be the nearest to my heart; I have not locked from you the treasure of my gold, neither will I lock from you the treasure of my grief. Bendel, forsake me not. Bendel, you behold me rich, liberal, kind. You imagine that the world ought to honor me, and you see me fly the world, and hide myself from it. Bendel, the world has passed judgment, and cast me from it, and perhaps you too will turn from me when you know my fearful secret. Bendel, I am rich, liberal, kind, but, — O God! — I have no shadow!"

"No shadow!" cried the good youth with horror, and the bright tears gushed from his eyes. "Woe is me, that I was born to serve a shadowless master!" He was silent, and I held my face buried in my hands.

"Bendel," added I, at length, tremblingly — "now you have my confidence, and now can you betray it — go forth and testify against me." He appeared to be in a heavy conflict with himself; at length, he flung himself before me and seized my hand, which he bathed with his tears.

"No!" exclaimed he, "think the world as it will, I cannot, and will not, on account of a shadow abandon my kind master; I will act justly, and not with policy. I will continue with you, lend you my shadow, help you when I can, and when I cannot, weep with you." I fell on his neck, astonished at such unusual sentiment, for I was convinced that he did it not for gold.

From that time my fate and my mode of life were in some degree changed. It is indescribable how much Bendel continued to conceal my defect. He was everywhere before me and with me; foreseeing everything, hitting on contrivances, and where danger threatened, covering me quickly with his shadow, since he was taller and bulkier than I. Thus I ventured myself again among men, and began to play a part in the world. I was obliged, it is true, to assume many peculiarities and humors, but such became the rich, and so long as the truth continued to be concealed, I enjoyed all the honor and respect which were paid to my wealth. I looked calmly forward to the promised visit of the mysterious unknown, at the end of the year and the day.

I felt, indeed, that I must not remain longer in a place where I had once been seen without a shadow, and where I might easily be betrayed. Perhaps I yet thought too much of the manner in which I had introduced myself to Thomas John, and it was a mortifying recollection. I would therefore here merely make an experiment, to present myself with more ease and confidence elsewhere, but that now occurred which held me a long time riveted to my vanity, for there it is in the man that the anchor bites the firmest ground.

Even the lovely Fanny, whom I in this place again encountered, honored me with some notice without recollecting ever to have seen me before; for I now had wit and sense. As I spoke, people listened, and I could not, for the life of me, comprehend myself how I had arrived at the art of maintaining and engrossing so easily the conversation. The impression which I perceived that I had made on the fair one, made of me just what she desired — a fool, and I thenceforward followed her through shade and twilight wherever I could. I was only so far vain that I wished to make her vain of myself, and found it impossible, even with the very best intentions, to force the intoxication from my head to my heart.

But why relate to you the whole long ordinary story? You yourself have often related it to me of other honorable people. To the old, well-

known play in which I goodnaturedly undertook a wornout part, there came in truth to her and me, and everybody, unexpectedly a most peculiar and poetic catastrophe.

As, according to my wont, I had assembled on a beautiful evening a party in a garden, I wandered with the lady, arm in arm at some distance from the other guests, and exerted myself to strike out pretty speeches for her. She cast down modestly her eyes, and returned gently the pressure of my hand, when suddenly the moon broke through the clouds behind me, and — she saw only her own shadow thrown forward before her! She started and glanced wildly at me, then again on the earth, seeking my shadow with her eyes, and what passed within her, painted itself so singularly on her countenance, that I should have burst into a loud laugh if it had not itself run ice-cold over my back.

I let her fall from my arms in a swoon, shot like an arrow through the terrified guests, reached the door, flung myself into the first chaise which I saw on the stand, and drove back to the city, where this time, to my cost, I had left the circumspect Bendel. He was terrified as he saw me; — one word revealed to him all. Post horses were immediately fetched. I took only one of my people with me, an arrant knave, called Rascal, who had contrived to make himself necessary to me by his cleverness; and who could suspect nothing of the present occurrence. That night I left upwards of a hundred miles behind me. Bendel remained behind me to discharge my establishment, to pay money, and to bring me what I most required. When he overtook me next day, I threw myself into his arms, and swore to him, never again to run into the like folly, but in future to be more cautious. We continued our journey without pause, over the frontiers and the mountains, and it was not till we began to descend and had placed those lofty bulwarks between us and our former unlucky abode, that I allowed myself to be persuaded to rest from the fatigues I had undergone, in a neighboring and little frequented bathing-place.

Chapter IV

I must pass in my relation hastily over a time in which, how gladly would I linger, could I but conjure up the living spirit of it with the recollection. But the color which vivified it, and can only vivify it again, is extinguished in me; and when I seek in my bosom what then so mightily animated it, the grief and the joy, the innocent illusion, — then do I vainly smite a rock in which no living spring now dwells, and the god is departed from me. How changed does this past time now appear to me. I would act in the watering-place an heroic character, ill studied, and myself a novice on the boards, and my gaze was lured from my part by a pair of blue eyes. The parents, deluded by the play, offer everything only to make the business quickly secure; and the poor farce closes in

mockery. And that is all, all! That presents itself now to me so absurd and commonplace, and yet is it terrible, that that can thus appear to me which then so richly, so luxuriantly, swelled my bosom. Mina! as I wept at losing thee, so weep I still to have lost thee also in myself. Am I then become so old? Oh, melancholy reason! Oh, but for one pulsation of that time! one moment of that illusion! But no! alone on the high waste sea of thy bitter flood! and long out of the last cup of champagne the elfin has vanished!

I had sent forward Bendel with some purses of gold to procure for me a dwelling adapted to my needs. He had there scattered about much money, and expressed himself somewhat indefinitely respecting the distinguished stranger whom he served, for I would not be named, and that filled the good people with extraordinary fancies. As soon as my house was ready Bendel returned to conduct me thither. We set out.

About three miles from the place, on a sunny plain, our progress was obstructed by a gay festal throng. The carriage stopped. Music, sound of bells, discharge of cannon, were heard; a loud vivat! rent the air; before the door of the carriage appeared, clad in white, a troop of damsels of extraordinary beauty, but who were eclipsed by one in particular, as the stars of night by the sun. She stepped forth from the midst of her sisters; the tall and delicate figure kneeled blushing before me, and presented to me on a silken cushion a garland woven of laurel, olive branches, and roses, while she uttered some words about majesty, veneration and love, which I did not understand, but whose bewitching silver tone intoxicated my ear and heart. It seemed as if the heavenly apparition had sometime already passed before me. The chorus struck in, and sung the praises of a good king and the happiness of his people.

And this scene, my dear friend, in the face of the sun! She kneeled still only two paces from me, and I without a shadow, could not spring over the gulf, could not also fall on the knee before the angel! Oh! what would I then have given for a shadow! I was compelled to hide my shame, my anguish, my despair, deep in the bottom of my carriage. At length Bendel recollected himself on my behalf. He leaped out of the carriage on the other side. I called him back, and gave him out of my jewel-case, which lay at hand, a splendid diamond crown, which had been made to adorn the brows of the lovely Fanny! He stepped forward, and spoke in the name of his master, who could not and would not receive such tokens of homage; there must be some mistake; and the good people of the city were thanked for their good will. As he said this, he took up the proffered wreath, and laid the brilliant coronet in its place. He then extended respectfully his hand to the lovely maiden, that she might arise, and dismissed, with a sign, clergy, magistrates, and all the deputations. No one else was allowed to approach. He ordered the throng to divide, and make way for the horses; sprang again into the carriage, and on we went at full

gallop, through a festive archway of foliage and flowers towards the city. The discharges of cannon continued. The carriage stopped before my house. I sprang hastily in at the door, dividing the crowd which the desire to see me had collected. The mob hurrahed under my window, and I let double ducats rain out of it. In the evening the city was voluntarily illuminated.

And yet I did not at all know what all this could mean, and who I was supposed to be. I sent out Rascal to make inquiry. He brought word to this effect — that the people had received certain intelligence that the good King of Prussia travelled through the country under the designation of a Count; that my adjutant had been recognized; and, finally, how great the joy was as they became certain that they really had me in the place. They now saw clearly that I evidently desired to maintain the strictest incognito, and how very wrong it had been to attempt so importunately to lift the veil. But I had resented it so graciously, so kindly, — I should certainly pardon their good-heartedness.

The thing appeared so amusing to the rogue, that he did his best, by reproving words, the more to strengthen the good folk in their belief. He made a very comical recital of all this: and as he found that it diverted me, he made a joke to me of his own additional wickedness. Shall I confess it? It flattered me, even by such means, to be taken for that honored head.

I commanded a feast to be prepared for the evening of the next day, beneath the trees which over-shadowed the open space before my house; and the whole city to be invited to it. The mysterious power of my purse; the exertions of Bendel and the active invention of Rascal, succeeded in triumphing over time itself. It is really astonishing how richly and beautifully everything was arranged in those few hours. The splendor and abundance which exhibited themselves, and the ingenious lighting up, so admirably contrived that I felt myself quite secure, left me nothing to desire. I could not but praise my servants.

The evening grew dark; the guests appeared, and were presented to me. Nothing more was said about Majesty; I was styled with deep reverence and obeisance, Herr Graf. What was to be done? I allowed the Herr Graf to please, and remained from that hour the Graf Peter. In the midst of festive multitudes my soul yearned alone after one. She entered late, — and wore the crown. She followed modestly her parents, and seemed not to know that she was the loveliest of all. They were presented to me as Mr. Forest-master, his lady and their daughter. I found many agreeable and obliging things to say to the old people; before the daughter I stood like a rebuked boy, and could not bring out one word. I begged her, at length, with a faltering tone, to honor this feast by assuming the office whose insignia she graced. She entreated with blushes and a moving look to be excused; but blushing still more than herself in her presence, I paid her as

her first subject my homage, with a most profound respect, and the hint of the Graf became to all the guests a command which every one with emulous joy hastened to obey. Majesty, innocence and grace, presided in alliance with beauty over a rapturous feast. Mina's happy parents believed their child only thus exalted in honor of them. I myself was in an indescribable intoxication. I caused all the jewels which yet remained of those which I had formerly purchased, in order to get rid of burthensome gold, all the pearls, all the precious stones, to be laid in two covered dishes, and at the table, in the name of the Queen, to be distributed round to her companions and to all the ladies. Gold, in the meantime, was incessantly strewed over the enclosing lists among the exulting people.

Bendel, the next morning, revealed to me in confidence that the suspicion which he had long entertained of Rascal's honesty, was now become certainty. That he had yesterday embezzled whole purses of gold. "Let us permit," replied I, "the poor scoundrel to enjoy the petty plunder. I spend willingly on everybody, why not on him? Yesterday he and all the fresh people you have brought me, served me honestly; they helped me joyfully to celebrate a joyful feast."

There was no further mention of it. Rascal remained the first of my servants, but Bendel was my friend and my confidant. The latter was accustomed to regard my wealth as inexhaustible, and he pried not after its sources; entering into my humor, he assisted me rather to discover opportunities to exercise it, and to spend my gold. Of that unknown one, that pale sneak, he knew only this, that I could alone through him be absolved from the curse which weighed on me; and that I feared him on whom my sole hope reposed. That, for the rest, I was convinced that he could discover me anywhere; I him nowhere; and that therefore awaiting the promised day, I abandoned every vain inquiry.

The magnificence of my feast, and my behavior at it, held at first the credulous inhabitants of the city firmly to their preconceived opinion. True, it was soon stated in the newspapers that the whole story of the journey of the King of Prussia had been a mere groundless rumor; but a king I now was, and must, spite of everything, a king remain, and truly one of the most rich and royal who had ever existed; only people did not rightly know what king. The world has never had reason to complain of the scarcity of monarchs, at least in our time. The good people who had never seen any of them, pitched with equal correctness first on one and then on another; Graf Peter still remained who he was.

At one time appeared amongst the guests at the Bath, a tradesman, who had made himself bankrupt in order to enrich himself; and who enjoyed universal esteem, and had a broad though somewhat pale shadow. The property which he had scraped together, he resolved to lay out in ostentation, and it even occurred to him to enter into rivalry with me. I had recourse to my purse, and soon brought the poor devil to such a

pass, that in order to save his credit he was obliged to become bankrupt a second time, and hasten over the frontier. Thus I got rid of him. In this neighborhood I made many idlers and good-for-nothing fellows.

With all the royal splendor and expenditure by which I made all succumb to me, I still in my own house lived very simply and retired. I had established the strictest circumspection as a rule. No one except Bendel, under any pretence whatever, was allowed to enter the rooms which I inhabited. So long as the sun shone, I kept myself shut up there, and it was said the Graf was employed in his cabinet. With this employment numerous couriers stood in connection, whom I, for every trifle, sent out and received. I received company alone under my trees, or in my hall arranged and lighted according to Bendel's plan. When I went out, on which occasions it was necessary that I should be constantly watched by the Argus eyes of Bendel, it was only to the Forester's Garden, for the sake of one alone; for my love was the innermost heart of my life.

Oh, my good Chamisso! I will hope that you have not yet forgotten what love is! I leave much unmentioned here to you. Mina was really an amiable, kind, good child. I had taken her whole imagination captive. She could not, in her humility, conceive how she could be worthy that I should alone have fixed my regard on her; and she returned love for love with all the youthful power of an innocent heart. She loved like a woman, offering herself wholly up: self-forgetting; living wholly and solely for him who was her life; regardless if she herself perished. — That is to say, she really loved.

But I — oh what terrible hours — terrible and yet worthy that I should wish them back again, — have I often wept on Bendel's bosom, when after the first unconscious intoxication, I recollected myself; looked sharply into myself; I, without a shadow, with knavish selfishness destroying this angel, this pure soul which I had deceived and stolen. Then did I resolve to reveal myself to her; then did I swear with a most passionate oath to tear myself from her, and to fly; then did I burst into tears, and concert with Bendel how in the evening I should visit her in the Forester's garden.

At other times I flattered myself with great expectations from the rapidly approaching visit from the gray man, and wept again when I had in vain tried to believe in it. I had calculated the day on which I expected again to see the fearful one; for he had said in a year and a day; and I believed his word.

The parents, good honorable old people, who loved their only child extremely, were amazed at the connection, as it already stood, and they knew not what to do in it. Earlier they could not have believed that the Graf Peter could think only of their child; but now he really loved her and was beloved again. The mother was probably vain enough to believe in the probability of a union, and to seek for it; the sound masculine understanding of the father did not give way to such overstretched imag-

inations. Both were persuaded of the purity of my love! they could do nothing more than pray for their child.

I have laid my hand on a letter from Mina of this date, which I still retain. Yes, this is her own writing. I transcribe it for you:

"I am a weak silly maiden, and cannot believe that my beloved, because I love him dearly, dearly, will make the poor girl unhappy. Ah! thou art so kind, so inexpressibly kind, but do not misunderstand me. Thou shalt sacrifice nothing for me, desire to sacrifice nothing for me. Oh God! I should hate myself if thou didst! No — thou hast made me immeasurably happy; hast taught me to love thee. Away! I know my own fate. Graf Peter belongs not to me, he belongs to the world. I will be proud when I hear — 'that was he, and that was he again, — and that has he accomplished; there they have worshipped him, and there they have deified him!' See, when I think of this, then am I angry with thee, that with a simple child thou canst forget thy high destiny. Away! or the thought will make me miserable! I — oh! who through thee am so happy, so blessed. Have I not woven, too, an olive branch and a rosebud into thy life, as into the wreath which I was allowed to present to thee? I have thee in my heart, my beloved, fear not to leave me. I will die oh! so happy, so ineffably happy through thee!"

You can imagine how the words must cut through my heart. I explained to her that I was not what people believed me, that I was only a rich but infinitely miserable man. That a curse rested on me, which must be the only secret between us, since I was not yet without hope that it should be loosed. That this was the poison of my days; that I might drag her down with me into the gulf, — she who was the sole light, the sole happiness, the sole heart of my life. Then wept she again, because I was unhappy. Ah, she was so loving, so kind! To spare me but one tear she would (and with what joy) have sacrificed herself without reserve.

In the meantime she was far from rightly comprehending my words; she conceived in me some prince on whom had fallen a heavy ban, some high and honored head, and her imagination amidst heroic pictures limned forth her lover gloriously.

Once I said to her — "Mina, the last day in the next month may change my fate and decide it, — if not I must die, for I will not make thee unhappy." Weeping she hid her head in my bosom. "If thy fortune changes, let me know that thou art happy. I have no claim on thee. Art thou wretched, bind me to thy wretchedness, that I may help thee to bear it."

"Maiden! maiden! take it back, that word, that foolish word which escaped thy lips. And knowest thou this wretchedness? Knowest thou this curse? Knowest who thy love, — what he — ? Seest thou not that I convulsively shrink together, and have a secret from thee?" She fell sobbing to my feet, and repeated with oaths her entreaty.

I announced to the Forest-master, who entered, that it was my intention

on the first approaching of the month to solicit the hand of his daughter. I fixed precisely this time, because in the interim many things might occur which might influence my fortunes. That I was unchangeable in my love to his daughter.

The good man was quite startled as he heard such words out of the mouth of Graf Peter. He fell on my neck, and again became quite ashamed to have thus forgotten himself. Then he began to doubt, to weigh, and to inquire. He spoke of dowry, security, and the fortune for his beloved child. I thanked him for reminding me of these things. I told him that I desired to settle myself in this country where I seemed to be beloved, and to lead a care-free life. I begged him to purchase the finest estate that the country had to offer, in the name of his daughter, and to charge the cost to me. A father could, in such matter, best serve a lover. It gave him enough to do, for everywhere a stranger was before him, and he could only purchase for about a million.

My thus employing him was, at bottom, an innocent scheme to remove him to a distance, and I had employed him similarly before. For I must confess that he was rather wearisome. The good mother was, no the contrary, somewhat deaf, and not like him jealous of the honor of entertaining the Graf.

The mother joined us. The happy people pressed me to stay longer with them that evening, — I dared not remain another minute. I saw already the rising moon glimmer of the horizon, — my time was up.

The next evening I went again to the Forester's garden. I had thrown my cloak over my shoulders and pulled my hat over my eyes. I advanced to Mina. As she looked up and beheld me, she gave an involuntary start, and there stood again clear before my soul the apparition of that terrible night when I showed myself in the moonlight without a shadow. It was actually she! But had she also recognized me again? She was silent and thoughtful; on my bosom lay a hundred-weight pressure. I arose from my seat. She threw herself silently weeping on my bosom. I went.

I now found her often in tears. It grew darker and darker in my soul; the parents meanwhile swam in supreme felicity; the eventful day passed on sad and sullen as a thunder cloud. The eve of the day was come. I could scarcely breathe. I had in precaution filled several chests with gold. I watched the midnight hour approach. — It struck.

I now sat, my eye fixed on the fingers of the clock, counting the minutes, the seconds, like dagger-strokes. At every noise which arose, I started up. The day broke. The leaden hours crowded upon each other. It was noon — evening — night: as the clock fingers sped on, hope withered; it struck eleven and nothing appeared; the last minutes of the last hour fell, and nothing appeared. It struck the first stroke, — the last stroke of the twelfth hour, and I sank hopeless and in boundless tears upon my bed. On the morrow I should — forever shadowless, solicit the hand of my beloved. Towards morning an anxious sleep pressed down my eyelids.

Chapter V

It was still early morning when voices, which were raised in my antechamber in violent dispute, awoke me. I listened. Bendel forbade entrance; Rascal swore high and hotly that he would receive no commands from his fellow, and insisted in forcing his way into my room. The good Bendel warned him that such words, came they to my ear, would turn him out of his most advantageous service. Rascal threatened to lay hands on him if he any longer obstructed his entrance.

I had half dressed myself. I flung the door wrathfully open, and advanced to Rascal — "What wantest thou, villain?" He stepped two strides backwards, and replied quite coolly: "To request you most humbly, Herr Graf, just to allow me to see your shadow; — the sun shines at this moment so beautifully in the court."

I was struck, as with thunder. It was some time before I could recover my speech. "How can a servant towards his master"— ? He interrupted very calmly my speech —

"A servant may be a very honorable man, and not be willing to serve a shadowless master — I demand my discharge." It was necessary to try other chords. "But honest, dear Rascal, who has put the unlucky idea into your head? How canst thou believe — ?"

He proceeded in the same tone — "People will assert that you have no shadow — in short, you show me your shadow, or give me my discharge."

Bendel, pale and trembling, but more discreet than I, gave me a sign, sought refuge in the all-silencing gold; but that had lost its power. He threw it at my feet. "From a shadowless man I accept nothing!" He turned his back upon me, and went most deliberately out of the room with his hat upon his head and whistling a tune. I stood there with Bendel as one turned to stone, thoughtless, motionless, gazing after him.

Heavily sighing and with death in my heart, I prepared myself to redeem my promise, and like a criminal before his judge, to appear in the Forest-master's garden. I alighted in the dark arbor, which was named after me, and where they would be sure also at this time to await me. The mother met me, care-free and joyous. Mina sat there, pale and lovely as the first snow which often in the autumn kisses the last flowers, and then instantly dissolves into bitter water. The Forest-master went agitatedly to and fro, a written paper in his hand, and appeared to force down many things in himself which painted themselves with rapidly alternating flushes and paleness on his otherwise immovable countenance. He came up to me as I entered and with frequently choked words, begged to speak with me alone. The path in which he invited me to follow him, conducted towards an open, sunny part of the garden. I sank speechless on a seat, and then followed a long silence, which even the good mother dared not interrupt.

The Forest-master raged continually with unequal steps to and fro in the arbor, and suddenly halting before me, glanced on the paper which he held, and demanded of me with a searching look —

"May not, Herr Graf, a certain Peter Schlemihl be not quite unknown to you?" I was silent. "A man of superior character and singular attainments —" He paused for an answer.

"And suppose I were the same man?"

"Who," added he vehemently — "has by some means, lost his shadow!"

"Oh, my foreboding, my foreboding!" exclaimed Mina, "Yes, I have long known it, he has no shadow," and she flung herself into the arms of her mother who, terrified, clasped her convulsively, and upbraided her that to her own hurt she had kept to herself such a secret. But she, like Arethusa, was changed into a fountain of tears, which at the sound of my voice flowed still more copiously, and at my approach burst forth in torrents.

"And you," again grimly began the Forest-master, "and you, with unparalleled impudence, have made no scruple to deceive these and myself, and you give out that you love her whom you have so deeply humbled. See, there, how she weeps and writhes! Oh, horrible! horrible!"

I had to such a degree lost all reflection, that talking like one crazed, I began — "And, after all, a shadow is nothing but a shadow; one can do very well without that, and it is not worth while to make such a riot about it." But I felt so sharply the baselessness of what I was saying, that I stopped of myself, without his deigning me an answer, and I then added, "What one has lost at one time, may be found again at another!"

He rushed fiercely towards me — "Confess to me, sir! confess to me, how became you deprived of your shadow!"

I was compelled again to lie. "A rude fellow one day trod so heavily on my shadow that he rent a great hole in it. I have only sent it to be mended, for money can do much, and I was to have received it back yesterday."

"Good, sir, very good!" replied the Forest-master. "You solicit my daughter's hand; others do the same. I have, as her father, to care for her. I give you three days in which to provide a shadow. If you appear before me within these three days with a good, well-fitting shadow, you shall be welcome to me; but on the fourth day — I tell you plainly, — my daughter is the wife of another."

I would yet attempt to speak a word to Mina, but she clung, sobbing violently, only closer to her mother's breast, who motioned me to be silent and to withdraw. I reeled away, and the world seemed to close itself behind me.

Escaped from Bendel's affectionate oversight, I traversed in erring course, woods and fields. The perspiration of my agony dropped from my brow, a hollow groaning convulsed my bosom, madness raged within me.

I know not how long this had continued, when on a sunny heath, I felt myself plucked by the sleeve. I stood still and looked round — it was the man in the gray coat, who seemed to have run himself quite out of breath in pursuit of me. He immediately began:

"I had announced myself for to-day, but you could not wait the time. There is nothing amiss, however, yet. You consider the matter, receive your shadow again in exchange, which is at your service, and turn immediately back. You shall be welcome in the Forest-master's garden; the whole has been only a joke. Rascal, who has betrayed you, and who seeks the hand of your bride, I will take charge of; the fellow is ripe."

I stood there as still asleep. "Announced for to-day?" I counted over again the time, — he was right. I had constantly miscalculated a day. I sought with the right hand in my bosom for my purse: he guessed my meaning, and stepped two paces backwards.

"No, Herr Graf, that is in too good hands, keep you that." I stared at him with eyes of inquiring wonder, and he proceeded: "I request only a trifle, as memento. Be so good as to set your name to this paper." On the parchment stood the words:

"By virtue of this my signature, I make over my soul to the holder of this, after its natural separation from the body."

I gazed with speechless amazement, alternately at the writing and the gray unknown. Meanwhile, with a new-made pen he had taken up a drop of blood which flowed from a fresh thorn-scratch on my hand and presented it to me.

"Who are you then?" at length I asked him.

"What signifies it?" he replied. "And is not that plain enough to be seen in me? A poor devil, a sort of learned man and doctor, who in return for precious arts, receives from his friends poor thanks, and for himself has no other amusement on earth but to make his little experiments. — But, however, sign. To the right there — PETER SCHLEMIHL."

I shook my head, and said, "Pardon me, sir, I do not sign that."

"Not?" replied he, in amazement, "and why not?"

"It seems to me to a certain degree serious to stake my soul on a shadow."

"So, so," repeated he, "serious!" and he laughed almost in my face. "And if I might venture to ask, what sort of thing is that soul of yours? Have you ever seen it? And what do you think of doing with it when you are dead? Be glad that you have found an amateur who in your lifetime is willing to pay you for the bequest of this X, of this galvanic power, or polarized Activity, or whatever this silly thing may be, with something actual; that is to say, with your real shadow, through which you may arrive at the hand of your beloved, and at the accomplishment of all your desires. Will you rather push forth, and deliver up that poor young creature to that low bred scoundrel Rascal? No, you must witness that with

your own eyes. Here, I lend you the Tarn-cap," (the cap of invisibility,) — he drew it from his pocket — "and we will proceed unseen to the Forester's garden."

I must confess that I was excessively ashamed of being ridiculed by this man. I detested him from the bottom of my heart; and I believe that this personal antipathy withheld me, more than principle, or prejudice, from purchasing my shadow, essential as it was, by the required signature. The thought also was intolerable to me of making the excursion which he proposed, in his company. To see this abhorred sneak, this mocking cobold, step between me and my beloved, two torn and bleeding hearts, revolted my innermost feeling. I regarded what was past as predestined, and my wretchedness as unchangeable, and turning to the man, I said to him,

"Sir, I have sold you my shadow for this in itself most excellent purse, and I have sufficiently repented of it. Let the bargain be at an end, in God's name!" He shook his head, and made a very gloomy face. I continued, "I will then sell you nothing further of mine, even for this offered price of my shadow; and, therefore, I shall sign nothing. From this you may understand, that the cap-wearing to which you invite me, must be much more amusing for you than for me. Excuse me, therefore; and as it cannot now be otherwise, let us part."

"It grieves me, Monsieur Schlemihl, that you obstinately decline the business which I propose to you. Perhaps another time I may be more fortunate. Till our speedy meeting again! — Apropos: Permit me yet to show you that the things which I purchase I by no means suffer to grow mouldy, but honorably preserve, and that they are well used by me."

With that he drew my shadow out of his pocket and with a dexterous throw unfolding it on the heath, spread it out on the sunny side of his feet, so that he walked between two attendant shadows, his own and mine, for mine must equally obey him, and accommodate itself to and follow all his movements.

When I once saw my poor shadow again, after so long an absence, and beheld it degraded to so vile a service, whilst I, on its account, was in such unspeakable trouble, my heart broke, and I began bitterly to weep. The detested wretch swaggered with the plunder snatched from me, and impudently renewed his proposal.

"You can yet have it. A stroke of the pen, and you snatch therewith the poor unhappy Mina from the claws of the villain into the arms of the most honored Herr Graf; — as observed, only a stroke of the pen."

My tears burst forth with fresh impetuosity, but I turned away and motioned to him to withdraw himself. Bendel who, filled with anxiety, had traced me to this spot, at this moment arrived. When the kind, good soul, found me weeping, and saw my shadow, which could not be mistaken, in the power of the mysterious gray man, he immediately resolved,

was it even by force, to restore to me the possession of my property; and as he did not understand going much about with tender phrases, he immediately assaulted the man with words, and without much asking, ordered him bluntly to allow that which was my own, instantly to follow me. Instead of answer, he turned his back, and went. But Bendel up with his buckthorn cudgel which he carried, and following on his heels, without mercy, and with reiterated commands to give up the shadow, made him feel the full force of his vigorous arm. He, as accustomed to such handling, ducked his head, set up his shoulders, and with silent and deliberate steps pursued his way over the heath, at once going off with my shadow and my faithful servant. I long heard the heavy sounds roll over the waste, till they were finally lost in the distance. I was alone, as before, with my misery.

Chapter VI

Left alone on the wild heath, I gave free current to my countless tears, relieving my heart from an ineffably weary weight. But I saw no bound, no outlet, no end to my intolerable misery, and I drank besides with savage thirst of the fresh poison which the unknown had poured into my wounds. When I called the image of Mina before my soul and the dear, sweet form appeared pale and in tears, as I saw her last in my shame, then stepped the shadow of the impudent and mocking Rascal between her and me; I covered my face and fled through the wild. But the hideous apparition left me not, but pursued me in my flight, till I sank breathless on the ground, and moistened it with a fresh torrent of tears.

And all for a shadow. And this shadow a pen-stroke would have obtained for me. I thought on the strange proposition and my refusal. All was chaos in me. I had no longer either judgment or mastership of thought.

The day went by. I stilled my hunger with wild fruits; my thirst in the nearest mountain stream. The night fell; I lay down beneath a tree. The damp morning awoke me out of a heavy sleep in which I heard myself rattle in the throat as in death. Bendel must have lost all trace of me, and it rejoiced me to think so. I would not return again amongst men before whom I fled in terror, like the timid game of the mountains. Thus I lived through three weary days.

On the fourth morning I found myself on a sandy plain bright with the sun, and sat on the fragment of a rock in its beams, for I loved now to enjoy its long-withheld countenance. I still fed my heart with its despair. A light rustle startled me. Ready for flight I threw round me a hurried glance; I saw no one, but in the sunny sand there glided past me a human shadow, not unlike my own, which wandering there alone, seemed to have got away from its possessor. There awoke in me a mighty yearning.

"Shadow," said I, "dost thou seek thy master? I will be he," and I sprang forward to seize it. I thought that if I succeeded in treading on it so that its feet touched mine, it probably would remain hanging there, and in time accommodate itself to me.

The shadow, on my moving, fled before me, and I was compelled to begin a strenuous chase of the light fugitive, for which the thought of rescuing myself from my fearful condition could alone have endowed me with the requisite vigor. It flew towards a wood, at a great distance, in which I must of necessity, have lost it. I perceived this, — a horror convulsed my heart, enflamed my desire, added wings to my speed; I gained evidently on the shadow, I came continually nearer, I must certainly reach it. Suddenly it stopped, and turned towards me. Like a lion on its prey, I shot with a mighty spring forwards to make seizure of it, — and dashed unexpectedly against a hard and bodily object. Invisibly I received the most unprecedented blows on the ribs that mortal man probably ever received.

The effect of the terror in me was convulsively to close my arms, and firmly to enclose that which stood unseen before me. In the rapid transaction, I plunged forward to the ground, but backwards and under me was a man whom I had embraced and who now first became visible.

The whole occurrence became now very naturally explicable to me. The man must have carried the invisible bird's nest which renders him who holds it, but not his shadow, imperceptible, and had now cast it away. I glanced round, soon discovered the shadow of the invisible nest itself, leaped up and towards it, and did not miss the precious prize. Invisible and shadowless, I held the nest in my hand.

The man swiftly springing up, gazing round instantly after his fortunate conqueror, descried on the wide sunny plain neither him nor his shadow, for which he sought with especial avidity. For that I was myself entirely shadowless he had no leisure to remark, nor could he imagine such a thing. Having convinced himself that every trace had vanished, he turned his hand against himself, and tore his hair. To me, however, the acquired treasure had given the power and desire to mix again amongst men. I did not want for self-satisfying palliatives for my base robbery, or rather I had no need of them; and to escape from every thought of the kind, I hastened away, not even looking round at the unhappy one, whose deploring voice I long heard resounding behind me. — Thus, at least, appeared to me the circumstances at the time.

I was on fire to proceed to the Forester's garden, and there myself to discern the truth of what the Detested One had told me. I knew not, however, where I was. I climbed the next hill, in order to look round over the country, and perceived from its summit the near city, and the Forester's garden lying at my feet. My heart beat violently, and tears of another kind than what I had till now shed, rushed into my eyes. I should

see her again! Anxious desire hastened my steps down the most direct path. I passed unseen some peasants who came out of the city. They were talking of me, of Rascal and the Forest-master; I would hear nothing, — I hurried past.

I entered the garden, all the tremor of expectation in my bosom. I seemed to hear laughter near me. I shuddered, threw a rapid glance round me, but could discover nobody. I advanced further. I seemed to perceive a sound as of man's steps at hand, but there was nothing to be seen. I believed myself deceived by my ear. It was yet early, no one in Graf Peter's arbor, the garden still empty. I traversed the well-known paths. I penetrated to the very front of the dwelling. The same noise more distinctly followed me. I seated myself with an agonized heart on a bench which stood in the sunny space before the house-door. It seemed as if I had heard the unseen cobold, laughing in mockery, seat himself near me. The key turned in the door, it opened, and the Forest-master issued forth with papers in his hand. A mist seemed to envelop my head. I looked up, and — horror! the man in the gray coat sat by me, gazing on me with a satanic leer. He had drawn his Tarncap at once over his head and mine; at his feet lay his and my shadow peaceably by each other. He played negligently with the well-known paper which he held in his hand, and as the Forest-master, busied with his documents, went to and fro in the shadow of the arbor, he stooped familiarly to my ear, and whispered in it these words, "So then you have notwithstanding accepted my invitation, and here sit we for once two heads under one cap. All right! all right! But now give me my bird's nest again; you have no further occasion for it, and are too honorable a man to wish to withhold it from me; but there needs no thanks: I assure you that I have lent it you with the most hearty good will." He took it unceremoniously out of my hand, put it in his pocket, and laughed at me, and that so loud that the Forest-master himself looked round at the noise. I sat there as if changed to stone.

"But you must allow," continued he, "that such a cap is much more convenient. It covers not only your person but your shadow at the same time, and as many others as you have a mind to take with you. See you, to-day again, I conduct two of them" — he laughed again. "Mark this, Schlemihl, what we at first won't do with a good will, that will we in the end be compelled to. I still fancy you will buy that thing from me, take back the bride (for it is yet time), and we leave Rascal dangling on the gallows, an easy thing for us so long as rope is to be had. Hear you — I will give you also my cap into the bargain."

The mother came forth, and the conversation began. "How goes it with Mina?"

"She weeps."

"Silly child! it cannot be altered!"

"Certainly not; but to give her to another so soon. Oh, man! thou art cruel to thy own child."

"No, mother, that thou quite mistakest. When she, even before she has wept out her childish tears, finds herself the wife of a very rich and honorable man, she will awake comforted out of her trouble as out of a dream, and thank God and us, that wilt thou see!"

"God grant it!"

"She possesses now indeed a very respectable property; but after the stir that this unlucky affair with the adventurer has made, canst thou believe that a partner so suitable as Mr. Rascal could be readily found for her? Dost thou know what a fortune Mr. Rascal possesses? He has paid six millions for estates here in the country free from all debets. I have had the title deeds in my own hands! He it was who everywhere had the start of me; and besides this, has in his possession bills on Thomas John for about five and a half millions."

"He must have stolen enormously."

"What talk is that again! He has wisely saved what would otherwise have been lavished away."

"A man that has worn livery —"

"Stupid stuff! he has, however, an unblemished shadow."

"Thou art right, but —"

The man in the gray coat laughed and looked at me. The door opened and Mina came forth. She supported herself on the arm of a chambermaid, silent tears rolled down her lovely pale cheeks. She seated herself on a stool which was placed for her under the lime trees, and her father took a chair by her. He tenderly took her hand, and addressed her with tender words, while she began violently to weep.

"Thou art my good, dear child, and thou wilt be reasonable, wilt not wish to distress thy old father, who seeks only thy happiness. I can well conceive it, dear heart, that it has sadly shaken thee. Thou art wonderfully escaped from thy misfortunes! Before we discovered the scandalous imposition, thou hadst loved this unworthy one greatly; see, Mina, I know it, and upbraid thee not for it. I myself, dear child, also loved him so long as I looked upon him as a great gentleman. But now thou seest how different all has turned out. What! every poodle has his own shadow, and should my dear child have a husband — no! thou thinkst, indeed, no more about him. Listen, Mina. Now a man solicits thy hand, who does not shun the sunshine, an honorable man, who truly is no prince, but who possesses ten millions; ten times more than thou; a man who will make my dear child happy. Answer me not, make no opposition, be my good, dutiful daughter, let thy loving father care for thee, and dry thy tears. Promise me to give thy hand to Mr. Rascal. Say, wilt thou promise me this?"

She answered with a faint voice, — "I have no will, no wish further upon earth. Happen with me what my father will."

At this moment Mr. Rascal was announced, and stepped impudently into the circle. Mina lay in a swoon. My detested companion glanced

archly at me, and whispered in hurried words — "And that can you endure? What then flows instead of blood in your veins?" He scratched with a hasty movement a slight wound in my hand, blood flowed, and he continued — "Actually red blood! — Sign then!" I had the parchment and the pen in my hand.

Chapter VII

My wish, dear Chamisso, is merely to submit myself to your judgment, not to endeavor to bias it. I have long passed the severest sentence on myself, for I have nourished the tormenting worm in my heart. It hovered during this solemn moment of my life, incessantly before my soul, and I could only lift my eyes to it with a despairing glance, with humility and contrition. Dear friend, he who in levity only sets his foot out of the right road, is unawares conducted into other paths, which draw him downwards, and ever downwards; he then sees in vain the guiding stars glitter in heaven; there remains to him no choice; he must descend unpausingly the declivity, and become a voluntary sacrifice to Nemesis. After the false step which had laid the curse upon me, I had, sinning through love, forced myself into the fortunes of another being, what remained for me but that where I had sowed destruction, where speedy salvation was demanded of me, I should blindly rush forward to the rescue? — for the last hour struck! Think not so meanly of me, my Adelbert, as to imagine that I should have regarded any price that was demanded as too high, that I should have begrudged anything that was mine even more than my gold. No, Adelbert! but my soul was possessed with the most unconquerable hatred of this mysterious sneaker along crooked paths. I might do him injustice, but every degree of association with him maddened me. And here stepped forth, as so frequently in my life, and as especially often in the history of the world, an event instead of an action. Since then I have achieved reconciliation with myself. I have learned, in the first place, to reverence Necessity; and what is more than the action performed, the event accomplished — her property. Then I have learned to venerate this Necessity as a wise Providence, which lives through that great collective Machine in which we officiate simply as co-operating, impelling and impelled wheels. What shall be, must be; what should be, happened, and not without that Providence, which I ultimately learned to reverence in my own fate, and in the fate of her on whom mine thus impinged.

I know not whether I shall ascribe it to the excitement of my soul under the impulse of such mighty sensations; or to the exhaustion of my physical strength, which during the last days such unwonted privations had enfeebled; or whether, finally, to the desolating commotion which the presence of this gray fiend excited in my whole nature; be that as it may, as I was on the point of signing, I fell into a deep swoon, and lay a long time as in the arms of death.

Stamping of feet and curses were the first sounds which struck my ear, as I returned to consciousness. I opened my eyes: it was dark; my detested attendant was busied scolding about me. "Is not that to behave like an old woman? Up with you, man! and complete off-hand what you have resolved on, if you have not taken another thought and had rather blubber." I raised myself with difficulty from the ground and gazed around in silence. It was late in the evening; festive music resounded from the brightly illuminated Forester's house, various groups of people wandered through the garden walks. One couple came near in conversation, and seated themselves on the bench which I had just quitted. They talked of the union this morning solemnized between Mr. Rascal and the daughter of the house. So, then, it had taken place.

I tore the Tarncap of the already vanished Unknown from my head, and hastened in brooding silence towards the garden gate, plunging myself into the deepest night of the thicket, and striking along the path past Graf Peter's arbor. But invisibly my tormenting spirit accompanied me, pursuing me with keenest reproaches. "These then are one's thanks for the pains which one has taken to support Monsieur, who has weak nerves, through the long precious day. And one shall act the fool in the play. Good, Mr. Wronghead, fly you from me if you please, but we are, nevertheless, inseparable. You have my gold and I your shadow, and this will allow us no repose. Did anybody ever hear of a shadow forsaking its master? Yours draws me after you till you take it again into favor, and I get rid of it. What you have hesitated to do out of fresh pleasure, will you, only too late, be compelled to seek through new weariness and disgust. One cannot escape one's fate." He continued speaking in the same tone. I fled in vain; he relaxed not, but ever present insultingly talked of gold and shadow. I could come to no single thought of my own.

I struck through unfrequented ways towards my house. When I stood before it, and gazed at it, I could scarcely recognize it. No light shone through the dashed-in windows. The doors were closed; no throng of servants was moving therein. There was a laugh near me. "Ha! ha! so goes it! But you'll probably find your Bendel at home, for he was the other day purposely sent back so weary, that he has most likely kept his bed since." He laughed again. "He will have a story to tell! Well then, for the present, good night! We meet speedily again!"

I had rung repeatedly; light appeared; Bendel demanded from within who rung. When the good man recognized my voice, he could scarcely restrain his joy. The door flew open, and we stood weeping in each other's arms. I found him greatly changed, weak and ill; but for me, — my hair was become quite gray!

He conducted me through the desolated rooms to an inner apartment which had been spared. He brought food and wine, and we seated ourselves, and he again began to weep. He related to me that he the other

day had cudgelled the gray-clad man whom he had encountered with my shadow, so long and so far, that he had lost all trace of me, and had sunk to the earth in utter fatigue. That after this, as he could not find me, he returned home, whither presently the mob, at Rascal's instigation, came rushing in fury, dashed in the windows, and gave full play to their lust of demolition. Thus did they to their benefactor. The servants had fled various ways. The police had ordered me, as a suspicious person to quit the city, and had allowed only four-and-twenty hours in which to evacuate their jurisdiction. To that which I already knew of Rascal's affluence and marriage, he had yet much to add. This scoundrel, from whom all had proceeded that had been done against me, must, from the beginning, have been in possession of my secret. It appeared that attracted by gold, he had contrived to thrust himself upon me, and at the very first had procured a key to the gold cupboard, where he had laid the foundation of that fortune, whose augmentation he could now afford to despise.

All this Bendel narrated to me with abundant tears, and then wept for joy that he again beheld me, again had me; and that after he had long doubted whither this misfortune might have led me, he saw me bear it so calmly and collectedly; for such an aspect had despair now assumed in me. I beheld my misery unchangeably before me; I had wept out to it my last tear; not another cry could be extorted from my heart; I presented to it my bare head with chill indifference.

"Bendel," I said, "thou knowest my lot. Not without earlier blame has my heavy punishment befallen me. Thou, innocent man, shalt no longer bind thy destiny to mine. I do not desire it. I ride to-night still forward; saddle me a horse; I ride alone; thou remainest: it is my will. Here still must remain some chests of gold; that retain thou; but I will alone wander incessantly through the world: but if ever a happier hour should smile upon me, and fortune look on me with reconciled eyes, then will I remember thee, for I have wept upon thy firmly faithful bosom in heavy and agonizing hours."

With a broken heart was this honest man compelled to obey this last command of his master, at which his soul shrunk with terror. I was deaf to his prayers, to his representations, blind to his tears. He brought me out my steed. Once more I pressed the weeping man to my bosom, sprung into the saddle, and under the shroud of night hastened from the grave of my existence, regardless which way my horse conducted me, since I had longer on the earth, no aim, no wish, no hope.

Chapter VIII

A pedestrian soon joined me, who begged, after he had walked for some time by the side of my horse, that as we went the same way, he might be allowed to lay a cloak which he carried, on the steed behind me. I

permitted it in silence. He thanked me with easy politeness for the trifling service; praised my horse, and thence took occasion to extol the happiness and power of the rich, and let himself, I know not how, fall into a kind of monologue, in which he had me now merely for a listener.

He unfolded his views of life and of the world, and came very soon upon metaphysics, in which the ultimate pretension extended to the discovery of the word that should solve all mysteries. He stated his premises with great clearness and proceeded to the proofs.

You know, my friend, that I have clearly discovered, since I have run through the schools of the philosophers, that I have by no means a turn for philosophical speculations, and that I have totally renounced for myself this field. Since then I have left many things to themselves; abandoned the desire to know and to comprehend many things; and as you yourself advised me, have, trusting to my common sense, followed as far as I was able the voice within me on the direct course. Now this rhetorician seemed to me to raise with great talent a firmly put-together fabric, which was at once self-based and self-supported, and stood as by an innate necessity. I missed in it completely, however, what most of all I was desirous to find, and so it became for me merely a work of art, whose ornamental compactness and completeless served only to charm the eye; nevertheless I listened willingly to the eloquent man who drew my attention from my grief to him; and I would have gladly yielded myself wholly up to him, had he captivated my heart as much as my understanding.

Meanwhile the time had passed, and unobserved the dawn had already brightened the heaven. I was horrified as I looked suddenly up, and saw the pomp of colors unfold itself in the east, which announced the approach of the sun; while at this hour in which the shadows ostentatiously display themselves in their greatest extent, there was no protection from it; no refuge in the open country to be descried. And I was not alone! I cast a glance at my companion, and was again terror-struck. It was no other than the man in the gray coat.

He smiled at my alarm, and went on without allowing me to get in a word. "Let, however, as is the way of the world, our mutual advantage for awhile unite us. It is all in good time for separating. The road here along the mountain-range, though you have not yet thought of it, is, nevertheless, the only one into which you could prudently have struck. Down into the valley you may not venture; and still less will you desire to return again over the heights, whence you are come; and this is also exactly my way. I see that you already turn pale before the rising sun. I will, for the time we keep company, lend you your shadow, and you, on that account, tolerate me in your society. You have no longer your Bendel with you, I will do you good service. You do not like me, and I am sorry for it; but, notwithstanding, you can make use of me. The devil is not so black as he is painted. Yesterday you vexed me, it is true; I will not up-

braid you with it to-day; and I have already shortened the way hither for you; that you must allow. Only just take your shadow again awhile on trial."

The sun had risen; people appeared on the road; I accepted, though with internal repugnance, the proposal. Smiling he let my shadow glide to the ground, which immediately took its place on that of the horse, and trotted gaily by my side. I was in the strangest state of mind. I rode past a group of country-people, who made way for a man of consequence, reverently, and with bared heads. I rode on, and gazed with greedy eyes and a palpitating heart on this my quondam shadow which I had now borrowed from a stranger, yes, from an enemy.

The man went carelessly near me, and even whistled a tune, he on foot, I on horseback. A dizziness seized me; the temptation was too great; I suddenly turned the reins; clapped spurs to the horse, and struck at full speed into a side-path. But I carried not off the shadow, which at the turning glided from the horse, and awaited its lawful possessor on the high road. I was compelled with shame to turn back. The man in the gray coat, when he had calmly finished his tune, laughed at me, set the shadow right again for me; and informed me, that it would then only hang fast and remain with me when I was disposed to become the rightful proprietor. "I hold you," continued he, "fast by the shadow, and you cannot escape me. A rich man, like you, needs shadow, it cannot be otherwise, and you only are to blame that you did not perceive that sooner."

I continued my journey on the same road; the comforts and the splendor of life again surrounded me; I could move about free and conveniently, since I possessed a shadow, although only a borrowed one; and I everywhere inspired the respect which riches command. But I carried death in my heart. My strange companion, who gave himself out as the unworthy servant of the richest man in the world, possessed an extraordinary professional readiness, prompt and clever beyond comparison, the very model of a valet for a rich man, but he stirred not from my side, perpetually directing the conversation towards me, and continually blabbing out the most confidential matters; so that, at length, were it only to be rid of him, I resolved to settle the affair of the shadow. He was become as burthensome to me as he was hateful. I was even in fear of him. He had made me dependent on him. He held me, after he had conducted me back into the glory of the world, which I had fled from. I was obliged to tolerate his eloquence upon myself, and felt, in fact, that he was in the right. A rich man in the world must have a shadow, and so soon as I desired to command the rank which he had contrived again to make necessary to me, I saw but one issue. By this, however, I stood fast; — after having sacrificed my love, after my life had been blighted, I would never sign away my soul to this creature, for all the shadows in the world. I knew not how it would end.

We sat one day before a cave which the strangers who frequent these mountains, are accustomed to visit. We heard there the rush of subterranean streams roaring up from immeasurable depths, and the stone cast in seemed, in its resounding fall, to find no bottom. He painted to me, as he often did, with a vivid power of imagination and in the lustrous charms of the most brilliant colors, the most carefully finished pictures of what I might achieve in the world by virtue of my purse, if I had but once my shadow in my possession. With my elbows rested on my knees, I kept my face concealed in my hands, and listened to the false one, my heart divided between the seduction and my own strong will. In such an inward conflict I could no longer contain myself, and the deciding strife began.

"You appear, sir, to forget that I have indeed allowed you, upon certain conditions, to remain in my company, but that I have reserved my perfect freedom."

"If you command it, I pack up."

He was accustomed to menace. I was silent. He began immediately to roll up my shadow. I turned pale, but I let it proceed. There followed a long pause; he first broke it.

"You cannot bear me, sir. You hate me; I know it; yet why do you hate me? Is it because you attacked me on the highway, and sought to deprive me by violence of my bird's nest? Or is it because you have endeavored in a thievish manner to cheat me out of my property, the shadow, which was entrusted to you entirely on your honor? I, for my part, do not, therefore, hate you. I find it quite natural that you should seek to avail yourself of all your advantages, cunning, and power. For the rest, that you have the very strictest principles, and that you think like honor itself, is a taste that you have, against which I have nothing to say. In fact, I think not so strictly as you; I merely act as you think. Or have I at any time pressed my finger on your throat in order to bring to me your most precious soul, for which I have a fancy? Have I, on account of my bartered purse, let a servant loose on you? Have I sought thus to swindle you out of it?" I had nothing to oppose to this, and he proceeded. — "Very good, sir! very good! you cannot endure me: I know that very well, and am by no means angry with you for it. We must part, that is clear, and in fact, you begin to be very wearisome to me. In order, then, to rid you of my further, shame-inspiring presence, I counsel you once more to purchase this thing from me." I extended to him the purse: "At that price?" — "No!"

I sighed deeply, and added, "Be it so, then. I insist, sir, that we part, and that you no longer obstruct my path in a world which it is to be hoped, has room enough in it for us both." He smiled, and replied, "I go, sir; but first let me instruct you how you may ring for me when you desire to see again, your most devoted servant. You have only to shake your purse, so that the eternal gold pieces therein jingle, and the sound

will instantly attract me. Every one thinks of his own advantage in this world. You see that I at the same time am thoughtful of yours, since I reveal to you a new power. Oh! this purse! — had the moths already devoured your shadow, that would still constitute a strong bond between us. Enough that you have me in my gold. Should you have any commands for your servant even when far off you know that I can show myself very active in the service of my friends, and the rich stand particularly well with me. You have seen it yourself. Only your shadow, sir, — allow me to tell you that — never again, except on one sole condition."

Forms of the past time swept before my soul. I demanded hastily — "Had you a signature from Mr. John?" He smiled. "With so good a friend it was by no means necessary." "Where is he? By God, I will know it!" He plunged hesitatingly his hand into his pocket, and, dragged thence by the hair, appeared Thomas John's ghastly disfigured form, and the blue death-lips moved themselves with heavy words — "*Justo judicio Dei judicatus sum; justo judicio Dei condemnatus sum.*" I shuddered with horror, and dashing the ringing purse into the abyss, I spoke to him the last words. "I adjure thee, horrible one, in the name of God! take thyself hence, and never again show thyself in my sight!"

He arose gloomily, and instantly vanished behind the masses of rock which bounded this wild, overgrown spot.

Chapter IX

I sat there without shadow and without money, but a heavy weight was taken from my bosom. I was calm. Had I lost my love, or had I in that loss felt myself free from blame, I believe that I should have been happy; but I knew not, however, what I should do. I examined my pockets: I found yet several gold pieces there; I counted them and laughed. I had my horses below at the inn; I was ashamed of returning thither; I must, at least, wait till the sun was gone down; it stood yet high in the heaven. I laid myself down in the shade of the nearest trees, and fell calmly asleep.

Lovely shapes blended themselves before me in charming dance into a pleasing dream. Mina with a flower-wreath in her hair floated by me, and smiled kindly upon me. The noble Bendel also was crowned with flowers, and went past with a friendly greeting. I saw many besides, and I believe you too, Chamisso, in the distant throng. A bright light appeared, but no one had a shadow, and what was stranger, it had by no means a bad effect. Flowers and songs, love and joy, under groves of palm. I could neither hold fast nor single out the moving, lightly floating, lovable forms: but I knew that I dreamed such a dream with joy, and was careful to avoid waking. I was already awake, but still kept my eyes closed in order to retain the fading apparition longer before my soul.

I finally opened my eyes; the sun stood still high in the heaven, but in the east; I had slept through the night. I took it for a sign that I should not return to the inn. I gave up readily as lost what I yet possessed there, and determined to strike on foot into a neighboring path, which led along the wood-grown feet of the mountains, leaving it secretly to fate to fulfil what it had yet in store for me. I looked not behind me, and thought not even of applying to Bendel, whom I left rich behind me, and which I could readily have done. I considered the new character which I should support in the world. My dress was very modest. I had on an old black Polonaise, which I had already worn in Berlin, and which, I know not how, had first come again into my hands for this journey. I had also a travelling cap on my head, a pair of old boots on my feet. I arose, and cut me on the spot a knotty stick as a memorial, and advanced at once on my wandering.

I met in the wood an old peasant who greeted me in friendly fashion and with whom I entered into conversation. I inquired, like an inquisitive traveller, first the way, then about the country, and its inhabitants, the productions of the mountains, and many such things. He answered my questions sensibly and loquaciously. We came to the bed of a mountain torrent, which had spread its devastations over a wide tract of the forest. I shuddered involuntarily at the sun-bright space, and allowed the countryman to go first; but in the midst of this dangerous spot, he stood still, and turned to relate to me the history of this desolation. He saw immediately my defect, and paused in the midst of his discourse.

"But how does that happen, — the gentleman has actually no shadow!"

"Alas! alas!" replied I, sighing, "during a long and severe illness, my hair, nails, and shadow fell off. See, father, at my age, my hair, which is renewed again, is quite white, the nails very short, and the shadow, — that will never grow again."

"Ay! ay!" responded the old man, shading his head, — "no shadow, that is bad! That was a bad illness that the gentleman had." But he continued not his narrative, and at the next cross way which presented itself, he left me without saying a word. Bitter tears trembled anew upon my cheeks, and my cheerfulness was gone.

I pursued my way with a sorrowful heart, and sought no further the society of men. I kept myself in the darkest wood, and was many a time compelled, in order to pass over a space where the sun shone, to wait for whole hours, lest some human eye should forbid me the transit. In the evening I sought for a small inn in the villages. I went particularly in quest of a mine in the mountains where I hoped to get work under the oath; since, besides that my present situation made it imperative that I should provide for my support, I had discovered that the most active labor alone could protect me from my own annihilating thoughts.

A few rainy days advanced me well on the way, but at the expense of

my boots, whose soles had been calculated for the Graf Peter, and not for the pedestrian laborer. I was already barefoot: I must procure a pair of new boots. The next morning I transacted this business with much gravity in a village where was held a wake, and where in a booth old and new boots stood for sale. I selected, and bargained long. I was forced to deny myself a new pair, which I would gladly have had, but the extravagant demand frightened me. I therefore contented myself with an old pair, which were yet good and strong, and which the handsome, blond-haired boy who kept the stall, for present cash payment handed to me with a friendly smile, and wished me good luck on my journey. I put them on at once, and left the place by the northern gate.

I was sunk very deep in my thoughts and scarcely saw where I set my feet, for I was pondering on the mine which I hoped to reach by evening, and where I hardly knew how I should propose myself. I had not advanced two hundred strides when I observed that I had got out of the way. I therefore looked round me, and found myself in a wild and ancient forest, where ax appeared never to have been wielded. I pressed forward still a few steps, and beheld myself in the midst of desert rocks which were overgrown only with moss and lichens, and between which lay fields of snow and ice. The air was intensely cold; I looked round, — the wood had vanished behind me. I took a few strides more, — and around me reigned the silence of death: boundlessly extended itself the ice whereon I stood, and on which rested a thick, heavy fog. The sun stood blood-red on the edge of the horizon. The cold was insupportable.

I knew not what had happened to me; the benumbing frost compelled me to hasten my steps; I heard only the roar of distant waters; a step and I was on the ice margin of an ocean. Innumerable herds of seals plunged rushing before me in the flood. I pursued this shore; I saw naked rocks, land, birch and pine forests; I now advanced for a few minutes right onwards. It was stifling hot. I looked around, — I stood amongst beautifully cultivated rice-fields, and beneath mulberry-trees. I seated myself in their shade; I looked at my watch; I had left the market town only a quarter of an hour before. I fancied that I dreamed; I bit my tongue to awake myself. I closed my eyes in order to collect my thoughts. I heard before me singular accents pronounced through the nose. I looked up. Two Chinese, unmistakable from their Asiatic form of countenance, if indeed I would have given no credit to their costume, addressed me in their speech with the accustomed salutations of their country. I arose and stepped two paces backward; I saw them no more. The landscape was totally changed, trees and forests instead of rice-fields. I contemplated these trees, and the plants which bloomed around me, which I recognized as the growth of south-eastern Asia. I wished to approach one of these trees, — one step, and again all was changed. I marched now like a recruit who is drilled, and strode slowly, and with measured steps. Wonder-

fully diversified lands, rivers, meadows, mountain chains, steppes, deserts of sand, unrolled themselves before my astonished eyes. There was no doubt of it, — I had seven-leagued boots on my feet.

Chapter X

I fell in speechless adoration on my knees and shed tears of thankfulness, for suddenly stood my fortune clear before my soul. For early offence thrust out from the society of men, I was cast, for compensation, upon Nature, which I ever loved; the earth was given me as a rich garden, study for the object and strength of my life, and science for its goal. It was no resolution which I adopted. I have since then, with severe, unremitted diligence, striven faithfully to represent what then stood clear and perfect before my eye, and my satisfaction has depended on the agreement of the demonstration with the original.

I prepared without hesitation, with a hasty survey, to take possession of the field which I should hereafter reap. I stood on the heights of Tibet, and the sun, which had risen upon me only a few hours before, now already stooped to the evening sky. I wandered over Asia from east to west, overtaking him in his course, and entered Africa. I gazed about me with eager curiosity, as I repeatedly traversed it in all directions. As I surveyed the ancient pyramids and temples in passing through Egypt, I descried in the desert not far from hundred-gated Thebes, the caves where the Christian anchorites once dwelt. It was suddenly firm and clear in me — here is thy home! I selected one of the most concealed which was at the same time spacious, convenient and inaccessible to the jackalls, for my future abode, and again went forward.

I passed at the pillars of Hercules, over to Europe, and when I had reviewed the southern and northern provinces, I crossed from northern Asia over the polar glaciers to Greenland and America; traversed both parts of that continent, and the winter which already reigned in the south drove me speedily back northwards from Cape Horn.

I tarried awhile till it was day in eastern Asia, and after some repose, continued my wandering. I traced through both Americas the mountain-chain which comprehends the highest known inequalities on our globe. I stalked slowly and cautiously from summit to summit, now over flaming volcanoes, now snow-crowned peaks, often breathing with difficulty; when reaching Mount Elias, I sprang across the Behring Strait to Asia. I followed the western shores, in their manifold windings, and examined with especial care which of the islands there located were accessible to me. From the peninsula of Malacca my boots carried me to Sumatra, Java, Bali and Lamboc. I attempted often with danger, and always in vain, a northwest passage over the lesser islets and rocks with which this sea is studded to Borneo and the other islands of this Archipelago. I was com-

pelled to abandon the hope. At length I seated myself on the extremest part of Lamboc, and gazing towards the south and east, wept, as at the fast closed grating of my prison, that I had so soon discovered my limits. New Holland so extraordinary, and so essentially necessary to the comprehension of the earth and its sun-woven garment, of the vegetable and the animal world, with the South-Sea and its Zoophyte islands, was interdicted to me, and thus, at the very outset, all that I should gather and build up was destined to remain a mere fragment! Oh, my Adelbert, what after all, are the endeavors of men!

Often did I in the severest winter of the southern hemisphere, endeavor, passing the polar glaciers westward, to leave behind me those two hundred strides out from Cape Horn, which sundered me probably from Van Dieman's Land and New Holland, regardless of my return, or whether this dismal region should close upon me as my coffin-lid, making desperate leaps from ice-drift to ice-drift, and bidding defiance to the cold and the sea. In vain — I never reached New Holland, but every time, I came back to Lamboc, seated myself on its extremest peak, and wept again, with my face turned towards the south and east, as at the fast closed bars of my prison.

I tore myself at length from this spot, and returned with a sorrowful heart into inner Asia. I traversed that further, pursuing the morning dawn westward, and came yet in the night to my proposed home in the Thebais, which I had touched upon in the afternoon of the day before.

As soon as I was somewhat rested, and when it was day again in Europe, I made it my first care to procure everything which I wanted. First of all, stop-shoes; for I had experienced how inconvenient it was when I wished to examine near objects, not to be able to slacken my stride, except by pulling off my boots. A pair of slippers drawn over them had completely the effect which I anticipated, and later I always carried two pairs, since I sometimes threw them from my feet, without having time to pick them up again, when lions, men, or hyenas startled me from my botanizing. My very excellent watch was, for the short duration of my passage, a capital chronometer. Besides this I needed a sextant, some scientific instruments and books.

To procure all this, I made several anxious journeys to London and Paris, which, auspiciously for me, a mist just then overshadowed. As the remains of my enchanted gold was now exhausted, I easily accomplished the payment by gathering African ivory, in which, however, I was obliged to select only the smallest tusks, as not too heavy for me. I was soon furnished and equipped with all these, and commenced immediately, as private philosopher, my new course of life.

I roamed about the earth, now determining the altitudes of mountains; now the temperature of its springs and the air; now contemplating the animal, now inquiring into the vegetable tribes. I hastened from the equa-

tor to the pole; from one world to the other, comparing facts with facts. The eggs of the African ostrich or the northern sea-fowl, and fruits, especially of the tropical palms and bananas, were even my ordinary food. In lieu of happiness I had tobacco, and of human society and the ties of love, one faithful poodle, which guarded my cave in the Thebais, and when I returned home with fresh treasures, sprang joyfully towards me, and gave me still a human feeling, that I was not alone on the earth. An adventure was yet destined to conduct me back amongst mankind.

Chapter XI

As I once scotched my boots on the shores of the north, and gathered lichens and sea-weed, an ice-bear came unawares upon me round the corner of a rock. Flinging off my slippers, I would step over to an opposite island, to which a naked crag which protruded midway from the waves offered me a passage. I stepped with one foot firmly on the rock, and plunged over on the other side into the sea, one of my slippers having unobserved remained fast on the foot.

The excessive cold seized on me; I with difficulty rescued my life from this danger; and the moment I reached land, I ran with the utmost speed to the Lybian deserts in order to dry myself in the sun, but as I was here exposed, it burned me so furiously on the head that I staggered back again very ill towards the north. I sought to relieve myself by rapid motion, and ran with swift, uncertain steps, from west to east, from east to west. I found myself now in the day, now in the night; now in summer now in the winter's cold.

I know not how long I thus reeled about on the earth. A burning fever glowed in my veins; with deepest distress I felt my senses forsaking me. As mischief would have it, in my incautious career, I now trod on some one's foot; I must have hurt him; I received a heavy blow, and fell to the ground.

When I again returned to consciousness, I lay comfortably in a good bed, which stood amongst many other beds in a handsome hall. Some one sat at my head; people went through the hall from one bed to another. They came to mine, and spoke together about me. They styled me *Number Twelve;* and on the wall at my feet stood, — yes, certainly it was no delusion, I could distinctly read on a black tablet of marble in great golden letters, quite correctly written, my name —

PETER SCHLEMIHL.

On the tablet beneath my name were two other rows of letters, but I was too weak to put them together. I again closed my eyes.

I heard something of which the subject was Peter Schlemihl read aloud, and articulately, but I could not collect the sense. I saw a friendly man, and a very lovely woman in black dress appear at my bedside. The forms were not strange to me, and yet I could not recognize them.

Some time went by, and I recovered my strength. I was called *Number Twelve*, and *Number Twelve*, on account of his long beard, passed for a Jew, on which account, however, he was not at all the less carefully treated. That he had no shadow appeared to have been unobserved. My boots, as I was assured, were, with all that I had brought hither, in good keeping, in order to be restored to me on my recovery. The place in which I lay was called the SCHLEMIHLIUM. What was daily read aloud concerning Peter Schlemihl, was an exhortation to pray for him as the Founder and Benefactor of this institution. The friendly man whom I had seen by my bed was Bendel; the lovely woman was Mina.

I recovered unrecognized in the Schlemihlium; and learned yet farther that I was in Bendel's native city, where, with the remains of my otherwise unblessed gold, he had in my name founded this Hospital, where the unhappy blessed me, and himself maintained its superintendence. Mina was a widow. An unhappy criminal process had cost Mr. Rascal his life, and her the greater part of her property. Her parents were no more. She lived here as a pious widow, and practised works of mercy.

Once she conversed with Mr. Bendel at the bedside of *Number Twelve*. "Why, noble lady, will you so often expose yourself to the bad atmosphere which prevails here? Does fate then deal so hardly with you that you wish to die?"

"No, Mr. Bendel, since I have dreamed out my long dream, and have awoke in myself, all is well with me; since then I crave not, and fear not death. Since then, I reflect calmly on the past and the future. Is it not also with a still and inward happiness that you now, in so devout a manner, serve your master and friend?"

"Thank God, yes, noble lady. But we have seen wonderful things; we have unwarily drunk much good, and bitter woes, out of the full cup. Now it is empty, and we may believe that the whole has been only a trial; and armed with wise discernment, await the real beginning. The real beginning is of another fashion; and we wish not back the first jugglery, and are on the whole glad, such as it was, to have lived through it. I feel also within me a confidence that it must now be better than formerly with our old friend."

"In me too," replied the lovely widow, and then passed on.

The conversation left a deep impression upon me, but I was undecided in myself, whether I should make myself known, or depart hence unrecognized. I took my resolve. I requested paper and pencil, and wrote these words: — "It is indeed better with your old friend now than formerly, and if he does penance it is the penance of reconciliation."

Hereupon I desired to dress myself, as I found myself stronger. The key of the small wardrobe which stood near my bed, was brought, and I found therein, all that belonged to me. I put on my clothes, suspended my botanical case, in which I rejoiced still to find my northern lichens, round

my black Polonaise, drew on my boots, laid the written paper on my bed, and as the door opened, I was already far on the way to the Thebais.

As I took the way along the Syrian coast, on which I for the last time had wandered from home, I perceived my poor Figaro coming towards me. This excellent poodle, who had long expected his master at home, seemed to desire to trace him out. I stood still and called to him. He sprang barking towards me, with a thousand moving assurances of his inmost and most extravagant joy. I took him up under my arm, for in truth he could not follow me, and brought him with me home again.

I found all in its old order; and returned gradually as my strength was recruited, to my former employment and mode of life, except that I kept myself for a whole year out of the, to me, wholly insupportable polar cold. And thus, my dear Chamisso, I live to this day. My boots are no worse for the wear, as that very learned work of the celebrated Tieckius, De Rebus Gestis Polticelli, at first led me to fear. Their force remains unimpaired, my strength only decays; yet I have the comfort to have exerted it in a continuous and not fruitless pursuit of one object. I have, so far as my boots could carry me, become more fundamentally acquainted than any man before me with the earth, its shape, its elevations, its temperatures, the changes of its atmosphere, the exhibitions of its magnetic power, and the life upon it, especially in the vegetable world. The facts I have recorded with the greatest possible exactness, and in perspicuous order in several works, and stated my deductions and views briefly in several treaties. I have settled the geography of the interior of Africa, and of the northern polar regions; of the interior of Asia, and its eastern shores. My Historia Stirpium Plantarum Utriusque Orbis stands as a grand fragment of the Flora Universalis Terræ, and as a branch of my Systema Naturæ. I believe that I have therein not merely augmented, at a moderate calculation, the amount of known species, more than one third, but have done something for the Natural System, and for the Geography of Plants. I shall labor diligently at my Fauna. I shall take care that, before my death, my works shall be deposited in the Berlin University.

And you, my dear Chamisso, have I selected as the preserver of my singular history, which, perhaps, when I have vanished from the earth, may afford valuable instruction to many of its inhabitants. But you, my friend, if you will live among men, learn before all things to reverence the shadow, and then the gold. If you wish to live only for yourself and for your better self — oh, then! — you need no counsel.

THEODOR STORM

(1817–1888)

Theodor Storm was born at Husum, in North Germany, in 1817. He became a magistrate in his native town, but was driven into exile for political reasons, returning after the war of 1864. He is the author of a good deal of charming and some political verse, but his fame rests on his many tales, romantic and vivid recitals of Medieval times and sentimental stories on modern themes. Of his early work, *Immensee* is undoubtedly the best example. This first appeared in 1852.

The translation here used is by William Metcalfe, and is reprinted from *The Twelve Best Short Stories in the German Language*, London and Glasgow, 1926, by special arrangement with, and permission of the publishers, Messrs. Gowans and Gray, Ltd. Glasgow and London.

IMMENSEE

The Old Man

ON AN afternoon late in autumn an old well-dressed man went slowly down the road. He appeared to be returning home from a walk; for his buckled shoes, which were of a bygone fashion, were covered with dust. His long gold-headed cane he carried under his arm; with his dark eyes, into which all his lost youth seemed to have retreated, and which contrasted strangely with his snow-white hair, he looked calmly around, or down into the town, which lay before him in the golden haze of evening. — He seemed almost a stranger; for of the passers-by only few greeted him, though many were involuntarily constrained to look into those grave eyes. At last he halted before a tall gabled house, took one last look at the town, and then entered the hall. At the ring of the door-bell the green curtain was drawn aside in the sitting-room from a hatch that opened on the hall, and an old woman's face appeared behind it. The man signed to her with his cane. "No light just yet!" he said in a rather Southern accent, and the housekeeper let the curtain fall again. The old man now walked across the spacious hall, then through a drawing-room, where great oak cabinets with china vases lined the walls; through the door facing him he entered a little lobby, from which a narrow stair led to the upper rooms of the back part of the house. Up this he slowly climbed, opened a door, and then stepped into a fairly large room. Here all was homelike and quiet; one wall was almost covered with shelves and book-

cases; on the others hung portraits and views; at a table with a green cover, on which several open books lay about, stood a heavy armchair with red velvet cushions. — After the old man had put his hat and stick in the corner, he seated himself in the arm-chair, and seemed to be resting with folded hands after his walk. — As he sat thus, it gradually became darker; at last a moonbeam fell through the window-panes upon the paintings on the wall, and, as the bright streak slowly moved along, the man's eyes followed it involuntarily. Now it lighted on a little portrait in a plain black frame. "Elisabeth!" said the old man in a low voice; and, as he uttered the word, the time was changed: *he was back in his youth.*

The Children

Soon the sweet form of a little girl approached him. Her name was Elisabeth, and she might be five years old; he himself was twice that age. Round her neck she wore a little red silk handkerchief, which went very well with her brown eyes.

"Reinhardt!" she cried, "we've a holiday! a holiday! No school all to-day, and none to-morrow either."

Reinhardt took the slate that he already had under his arm, and promptly put it behind the door; then the two children ran through the house into the garden, and through the garden-gate into the meadow. The unexpected holidays came in splendidly for them. Reinhardt with Elisabeth's help had constructed a house of sods here; they meant to spend the summer evenings in it; but it still wanted a seat. Now he went straight to work on it; nails, hammer, and the necessary boards were there already. Meanwhile Elisabeth went along the bank and began to gather the ring-shaped seeds of the wild mallow in her apron, to make into chains and necklaces for herself; and, by the time that Reinhardt, in spite of many a crooked-driven nail, had at last finished his seat and stepped out again into the sunshine, she was far away at the other end of the meadow.

"Elisabeth!" he called, "Elisabeth!" and at that she came, her locks streaming. "Come," he said, "Our house is ready now. You have made yourself quite hot; come inside, and we'll sit on the new seat. I'll tell you a story."

Then the two went inside and seated themselves on the new seat. Elisabeth took her little rings out of her apron and threaded them upon long strings; Reinhardt began to tell his story: "There were once three spinners —"

"Ugh!" said Elisabeth, "I know that one by heart. You must not always tell the same story."

So Reinhardt had to cut short the story of the three spinners, and instead he told her the story of the poor man who was thrown into the lion's den. "Now," said he, "it was night, you know, quite dark, and the

lions were asleep. But sometimes they yawned in their sleep, and stretched out their red tongues; then the man shuddered and thought the morning was coming. Then all at once a bright light shone round about him, and, when he looked up, an angel was standing before him. He signed to him with his hand and went straight away into the rock."

Elisabeth had been listening attentively. "An angel?" she said, "Had he any wings, then?"

"It's only a story," replied Reinhardt; "of course there aren't any angels."

"O, fie, Reinhardt!" she said, and stared at him in amazement. But, as he frowned at her, she asked him in doubt, "Then why do they always say that there are? Mother and Aunt, and at school, too?"

"That I don't know," he answered.

"But, tell me," said Elisabeth, "are there no lions either?"

"Lions? are there lions! Yes, in India; the idol-priests there harness them to cars, and travel with them through the desert. When I am big, I mean to go there some day myself. It's a thousand times finer there than here at home; there's no winter there, for one thing. You must come with me, too. Will you?"

"Yes," said Elisabeth. "but Mother must come with us in that case, and your mother, too."

"No," said Reinhardt, "they'll be too old then; they can't come."

"But I daren't go alone."

"But you must dare; you'll be really my wife then, and the others won't be able to say anything to you."

"But my mother will cry."

"O, we'll come back again," Reinhardt said hotly. "Just tell me straight out if you will travel with me! Else I'll go by myself, and then I'll never come back again."

The child was nearly crying.

"Don't look so crossly at me," she said; "I'll really go with you to India."

In the exuberance of his joy Reinhardt caught her by both hands and drew her out into the meadow. "To India! to India!" he sang, and swung round with her till the red handkerchief flew off her neck. Then of a sudden he released her, and said solemnly, "But nothing will come of it; you have no courage."

——"Elisabeth! Reinhardt!" just then came a call from the garden-gate. "Here, here!" answered the children, and scampered home hand in hand.

In the Forest

So the children lived together. She was often too quiet for him, he was often too lively for her; but they did not drift apart for all that; they

spent nearly all their spare time together, in winter in their mothers' confined rooms, in summer in wood and field. — Once, when Elisabeth was scolded by the schoolmaster in Reinhardt's presence, he wrathfully banged his slate on the table in order to draw the man's anger upon himself. It was not noticed. But Reinhardt lost all interest in the geography lesson; instead he composed a long poem, in which he represented himself by a young eagle, the schoolmaster by a hooded crow, and Elisabeth was a white dove. The eagle vowed to take vengeance on the hooded crow as soon as his wings were grown. The tears came to the young poet's eyes; he thought himself a very noble fellow. When he got home, he managed to procure a little parchment-covered book with plenty of blank leaves; on the first pages he inscribed his poem in a careful hand. — Soon afterwards he went to another school; here he struck up many new acquaintances with boys of his own age; but that did not disturb his friendship with Elisabeth. He now began to write down those she had liked best of the stories that he had formerly told her over and over again. While so engaged he often felt the desire to introduce some thoughts of his own; but, he knew not why, he could never manage it. So he wrote down the stories exactly as he had heard them. Then he gave the sheets to Elisabeth, who preserved them carefully in a drawer in her box; and it afforded him a pleasing satisfaction to hear her now and again of an evening read to her mother in his presence from the sheets that he had written.

Seven years had passed. Reinhardt was to leave the town to continue his education. Elisabeth could not reconcile herself to the thought that a time was now coming when she would be quite without Reinhardt. She was delighted when he told her one day that he would continue to write stories for her as before; he would send them for her with his letters to his mother; then she must write back to him and tell him how she had liked them. The time of his departure approached; but before that many more rhymes went into the parchment book. This alone was a secret from Elisabeth, although she was the occasion of the whole book and of most of its poems, which by degrees had filled nearly half its blank pages.

It was June; Reinhardt was to set out the next day. His friends wished to have a last festivity together before he went. So a large picnic-party was arranged to one of the woods near at hand. The hour's journey to the edge of the wood was made in carriages, then they took down the provision-baskets and walked on farther. First a fir-plantation had to be traversed; it was cool and shady, and the ground was all strewn with the fine needles. After half an hour's ramble they came out of the darkness of the firs into a green beech-wood; here all was light and verdure, in places a sunbeam broke through the leafy branches, a squirrel sprang from bough to bough above their heads. — At a place over which the crowns of ancient beeches grew together to form a transparent vault of foliage, the party made a halt. Elisabeth's mother opened one of the baskets; an

old gentleman constituted himself master of ceremonies. "All come round about me, you youngsters!" he cried, "and pay strict attention to what I have to tell you. Each of you will now get two dry rolls for breakfast; the butter has been left behind, so you must seek a relish for yourselves. There are plenty of strawberries in the wood, plenty, that is to say, for those who know where to find them. Those who are not clever enough must eat their bread dry; that is always the way in life. Do you understand what I say?"

"O yes!" the young people shouted.

"Well, see here," said the old man, "I've not done yet. We old people have knocked about enough in our day; so now we'll stay at home, that is to say, here under these spreading trees, and peel the potatoes and make the fire and lay the table, and when it is twelve o'clock the eggs will be boiled as well. For that you'll owe us half your strawberries, so that we can serve a dessert too. So now go East and West, and play fair."

The young people made all sorts of mischievous faces. "Wait!" the old man shouted once more. "I don't need to tell you that those who don't find any don't need to bring any; but get it into your clever heads that they won't get anything from us old people either. And now you've got plenty of good advice for one day; if you get strawberries as well, you'll have done very well for to-day at least."

The young people were of the same opinion and began to pair off for the expedition.

"Come, Elisabeth," said Reinhardt, "I know a strawberry-bed; you won't have to eat dry bread."

Elisabeth tied the green ribbons of her straw hat together and hung it over her arm. "Come away, then," she said, "the basket is ready."

Then they went into the wood, deeper and deeper; through moist, impenetrable shadows, where everything was still, only the cry of the unseen hawks in the air above them; then through thick brushwood, so thick that Reinhardt had to go first to make a way, here to break off a branch, there to bend aside a briar. But soon he heard Elisabeth behind him calling his name. He turned round. "Reinhardt!" she cried; "do wait, Reinhardt!" He could not make out where she was. At last he saw her some distance off, struggling with the bushes; her little head just showed above the tops of the ferns. So he went back and led her through the tangle of weeds and shrubs, out to a clear space where blue butterflies flitted among the stray woodland flowers. Reinhardt smoothed her moist hair from her heated face. Next he wished to put her straw hat on her head, but she would not allow it; then he entreated her, and at that she let him have his way.

"But where are your strawberries?" she at last asked, as she halted and drew a deep breath.

"They used to be here," he said; "but the toads have been before us, or the stoats, or perhaps the fairies."

"Yes," said Elisabeth, "the leaves are there still; but don't speak of fairies here. Come on, I'm not at all tired yet; we'll go on searching."

In front of them was a little brook, beyond it the forest again. Reinhardt lifted Elisabeth up in his arms and carried her across. After a while they came out again from the shade of the foliage into an extensive clearing. "There must be strawberries here," said the girl; "it smells so sweet."

They went searching through the sunny spot, but found none. "No," said Reinhardt, "it is only the scent of the heather."

Raspberry-bushes and hollies grew in confusion everywhere; a strong scent of heather, which alternating with short grass clothed all the open ground, filled the air. "It is lonely here," said Elisabeth, "where can the others be?"

Reinhardt had not thought about the way back. "Wait a minute; which way is the wind coming?" he said, and held up his hand. But there was no wind.

"Hush!" said Elisabeth, "I thought I heard voices. Just shout down there."

Reinhardt shouted through his hollowed hand. "Come here." — "Here," a shout came back.

"They're answering!" Elisabeth said, and clapped her hands.

"No, that was nothing, it was only the echo."

Elisabeth caught Reinhardt's hand. "I'm frightened," she said.

"No, you must not be frightened," said Reinhardt. "It's splendid here. Sit there in the shade among the plants. Let us rest awhile; we'll find the others all right."

Elisabeth seated herself under an overhanging beech, and listened attentively in every direction; Reinhardt sat a few paces off on a tree-stump and gazed silently across at her. The sun was right overhead; it was a scorching noontide heat; little steel-blue flies, glittering like gold, hung with quivering wings in the air; all around them was a faint buzzing and humming, and often they heard deep in the wood the tapping of the woodpeckers and the cries of other forest birds.

"Hark!" said Elisabeth, "the bells."

"Where?" asked Reinhardt.

"Behind us. Do you hear? It's twelve o'clock."

"Then the town lies behind us, and if we keep straight on in this direction, we are sure to come upon the others."

So they started on their way back; they had given up the search for strawberries, for Elisabeth was weary. At last the laughter of the company sounded through the trees; then they saw a white cloth showing on the ground; this was the table, and on it were strawberries enough and to spare. The old gentleman had a napkin tucked into his button-hole and was delivering the continuation of his moral discourse to the young people, while he carved away industriously at a roast.

"Here are the stragglers," the young people shouted, as they saw Reinhardt and Elisabeth coming through the trees.

"Here!" called the old gentleman, "empty your handkerchiefs, turn out your hats! Come, show us what you have found."

"Hunger and thirst!" said Reinhardt.

"If that's all," replied the old man, as he held up the full dish to them, "you may keep them. You know the conditions; no idlers fed here."

But at last he let himself be prevailed on, and now they began to their meal, while the thrush sang from the juniper-bushes.

So the day passed. — But Reinhardt had found something after all; though it was not strawberries, still it had grown in the wood. When he got home, he wrote in his old parchment book:

The wind has sunk to stillness
Upon this lonely heath;
The branches hang down idly,
The fair child sits beneath.

She sits among the wild thyme,
Amid its perfume rare.
The azure insect-chorus
Wheels flashing through the air.

Around her in her beauty
The silent forest dreams;
Among her nut-brown tresses
The flickering sunshine gleams.

Afar off laughs the cuckoo,
And hearing it I ween:
This maid with golden glances
Is of the forest queen.

So she was not merely his charge; she was to him the embodiment of all that was lovely and wonderful in his opening life.

The Child Stood at the Roadside

Christmas-eve arrived. — It was still afternoon when Reinhardt and some other students were sitting at an old oak table in the Rathskeller. The lamps on the walls were lighted, for down there it was already dusk; but there was only a scant gathering of guests; the waiters were leaning idly against the pillars. In a corner of the vault sat a fiddler and a zither-girl with her gipsy-like features; she had laid her instrument on her lap, and appeared to be gazing listlessly before her.

A champagne-cork popped at the students' table. "Drink, my Bohemian darling!" a young man of aristocratic appearance cried, as he passed a full glass over to the girl.

"I'd rather not," she said, without altering her posture.

"Then sing!" cried the young squire, and flung a piece of silver into her lap. The girl ran her fingers slowly through her black hair, while the fiddler whispered in her ear; but she tossed her head and rested her chin on her zither. "I won't play for him," she said.

Reinhardt sprang up, glass in hand, and presented himself before her. "What do you want?" she asked defiantly.

"To see your eyes."

"What have my eyes to do with you?"

Reinhardt cast a fiery glance down on her. "I know quite well, they are false." — She leaned her cheek on her open hand and lowered at him. Reinhardt raised his glass to his lips. "To your beautiful, wicked eyes!" he said, and drank.

She laughed and turned her head round. "Give it me!" she said, and, fastening her black eyes on his, she slowly drank what was left. Then she struck a chord and sang in a deep, impassioned voice:

Woe's me, my beauty
Lasts but a day;
Morning must see it
Vanish away.
Only this moment
Art thou my own;
For I must perish,
Perish alone.

As the fiddler was playing the concluding symphony in quick time, a new arrival joined the group.

"I meant to bring you along, Reinhardt," he said, "but you were gone. I say, Christmas has been at your place."

"Christmas," said Reinhardt. "I'm long past that."

"What! Your room was all smelling of Christmas-tree and brown cakes."

Reinhardt set his glass down and picked up his cap.

"What are you after?" the girl inquired.

"I'll be back soon."

She frowned. "Stay!" she said softly, and looked coaxingly at him.

Reinhardt hesitated. "I can't," he said.

She laughed and pushed him away with the point of her foot. "Go," she said, "you're no good; none of you are any good." And, as she turned aside, Reinhardt slowly climbed up the cellar-steps.

Outside in the street it was deep twilight; he felt the fresh winter-breeze on his heated brow. Here and there the bright gleam of a lighted Christmas-tree shone from the windows, now and again the sound could be heard indoors of little whistles and tin trumpets and in the intervals

jubilant children's voices. Troops of beggar-children were going from house to house or standing upon the doorsteps and trying to catch a glimpse through the windows of splendours denied to them. Sometimes a door would be suddenly flung open and scolding voices would drive a whole swarm of such little guests away from the lighted house into the dark street. At another an old Christmas carol was being sung in the lobby; there were clear girls' voices taking part. Reinhardt heard them not; he hurried past everything from one street to another. By the time he reached his lodgings it had become almost quite dark; he stumbled up the stairs and entered his own room. A sweet fragrance met him; it reminded him of home, it smelt like the Christmas room in his mother's house. With trembling hand he lighted his lamp; there lay a great parcel on the table, and, as he opened it, out fell the well-remembered brown Christmas-cakes; on some the initials of his name were traced in sugar; that could only be Elisabeth's doing. Then appeared a little packet with fine stitched linen handkerchiefs and wristbands, and finally letters from his mother and Elisabeth. Reinhardt opened the latter first; Elisabeth wrote:

"The pretty sugar letters will no doubt tell you who has been helping with the cakes; the same person has sewn the wristbands for you. This Christmas-eve will be very quiet with us; Mother always puts her spinning-wheel in the corner about half-past nine; it is so very lonely this winter, now that you are not here. Last Sunday the linnet that you gave me died; I cried a great deal, but indeed I always took good care of him. He used always to sing in the afternoons, when the sun shone on his cage; you know Mother used often to put a cloth over to keep him quiet when he sang so very loud. So now it is quieter than ever in the room, except that your old friend Erich now comes sometimes to see us. You once said he looked like his brown overcoat. I can't help remembering it now whenever he enters the door; it is too funny for anything; but don't say so to Mother, it would most likely make her cross. — Guess what I am giving your mother for Christmas! Can't you guess? Myself! Erich is drawing my portrait in black chalk; I have had to sit to him three times already, a whole hour each time. I did not like it at all, to let a strange man get to know my face by heart. I did not want it either, but my mother advised me to do so; she said it would be a very great pleasure indeed to good Mrs Werner.

"But you are not keeping your promise, Reinhardt. You have not sent any tales. I have complained about you often to your mother; but she always replies that you have something else than such childish things to do now. But I don't believe it. It's not that at all."

Next Reinhardt read his mother's letter, and, when he had read them both and folded them up slowly and laid them away, an invincible home-sickness came over him. For a while he paced up and down his room; he said to himself in an undertone half unconsciously:

He well-nigh was bewildered,
And knew not where to roam.
The child stood at the roadside
And pointed him to home.

Then he went to his desk, took out some money, and went downstairs to the street again. — Here in the meanwhile it had become quieter; the Christmas-trees had burned out, the processions of children had ceased. The wind was sweeping through the deserted streets; old and young were sitting in their family circles at home; the second part of Christmas-eve had begun. —

As Reinhardt came near the Rathskeller, he heard the scraping of the fiddle and the zither-girl's song coming up from its depths; there was a ring from the cellar-door below, and a dim form came swaying up the broad, dimly-lighted steps. Reinhardt stepped into the shadow of the houses and then passed hastily on. After a while he reached the lit-up shop of a jeweller; and, after purchasing a little red coral cross there, he went back again the same way that he had come.

Not far from his abode he noticed a little girl clad in pitiful rags standing at a tall house-door making vain attempts to open it. "Shall I help you?" he asked. The child made no answer, but let the heavy door-handle go. Reinhardt opened the door with ease. "No," he said, "they might drive you away; come with me! I'll give you some Christmas-cakes." Then he shut the door again and took the little girl by the hand, who accompanied him without a word to his lodgings.

He had left the light burning when he went out. "Here are your cakes," he said, and put half of his whole stock in her pinafore, only none of those with the sugar initials. "Now run home and give some of them to your mother." The child looked up at him shyly; she seemed to be unaccustomed to such kindness and unable to say anything in return. Reinhardt opened the door and lighted her out, whereupon the little one flew like a bird down the stairs with her cakes, and out of the house.

Reinhardt stirred up the fire in his stove and set his dusty inkstand on the table; then he sat himself down and wrote and wrote the whole night long, letters to his mother and to Elisabeth. The remainder of the Christmas-cakes lay untouched beside him; but he had buttoned on Elisabeth's wristbands, which contrasted very strangely with his white shaggy coat. He was still sitting thus when the winter sun fell on the frosted window-panes and showed him a pale, grave visage facing him in the mirror.

At Home

When Easter came, Reinhardt made a trip home. The morning after his arrival he went to Elisabeth. "How tall you have grown," he said, as the beautiful, slender girl advanced smiling to meet him. She blushed, but

she made no reply; and she gently tried to withdraw the hand that he had taken in his in welcome. He looked at her in uncertainty; she had never done that before; it seemed as if something foreign had come between them now. — This still remained even after he had been there for some time and had been coming back constantly every day. If they sat together by themselves, pauses arose which were painful to him and which he anxiously sought to avoid. In order to have some definite occupation during his holidays, he began to instruct Elisabeth in botany, in which he had taken a great interest during his first months at the University. Elisabeth, who was used to following his lead in everything and, besides, was quick to learn, entered willingly into the project. They made journeys to the fields or to the woods several times a week, and, if they had brought the green botanical case home at midday full of plants and flowers, Reinhardt came again a few hours later to share the common find with Elisabeth.

With this intention he entered the room one afternoon, as Elisabeth was standing at the window putting fresh chickweed on a gilt bird-cage that he had not seen there before. In the cage sat a canary, which fluttered its wings and shrieked as it pecked at Elisabeth's finger. Reinhardt's bird had formerly hung in the same place. "Has my poor linnet turned into a goldfinch since its death?" he inquired merrily.

"Linnets don't usually do that," said her mother, who sat spinning in her arm-chair. "Your friend Erich sent it in to Elisabeth to-day at noon from his farm."

"What farm?"

"Don't you know?"

"Know what?"

"That Erich took up his father's other farm at Immensee a month ago."

"But you never told me a word about that."

"Well," said the mother, "you never asked a word about your friend either. He is a very nice, sensible young man."

Her mother went out to look after the coffee; Elisabeth had her back turned to Reinhardt, and was still busy with the arrangement of her little bower. "Just a little moment, please," she said; "I'll be ready immediately." — As Reinhardt, contrary to his custom, did not answer, she turned round. A troubled expression had suddenly come into his eyes, such as she had never seen in them before. "What ails you, Reinhardt?" she asked, as she went up to him.

"Me?" he said mechanically, and let his eyes rest musingly on hers.

"You look so sad."

"Elisabeth," he said, "I can't endure that yellow bird."

She looked at him in astonishment; she did not understand him. "You are so odd," she said.

He caught her two hands, which she quietly left in his. Presently her mother came in again.

After coffee she sat down to her spinning-wheel; Reinhardt and Elisabeth went into the next room to arrange their plants. Stamens had to be counted, leaves and flowers carefully spread out, and two specimens of each kind laid to dry between the leaves of a great folio. The sunny afternoon-silence was about them; the only sounds were the hum of her mother's spinning-wheel in the next room, and the murmur of Reinhardt's voice as he now and again mentioned the arrangement of the classes of the plants, or corrected Elisabeth's untutored pronunciation of the Latin names.

"I still want the lily of the valley from our last lot," she finally said, when the whole stock had been identified and arranged.

Reinhardt drew a little white parchment book from his pocket. "Here is a sprig of lily of the valley for you," he said, as he took out the half-dried plant.

Seeing the written leaves, Elisabeth asked, "Have you been writing some more stories?"

"These are not stories," he answered, handing her the book.

They were, in fact, poems, most of them not more than a page long. Elisabeth turned over one leaf after another, she seemed to read only the headings. "When she was scolded by the schoolmaster," "When they were lost in the forest," "With the Easter story," "When she wrote to me for the first time"; they were nearly all in the same strain. Reinhardt looked searchingly at her, and, as she kept on turning over the leaves, he saw how at last a delicate blush appeared on her fair countenance and by degrees covered it entirely. He wanted to see her eyes; but Elisabeth did not look up, and at last put the book in front of him without a word.

"Don't give it back to me like that!" he said.

She took a brown sprig from the tin case. "I'll put in your favourite plant," she said, and gave the book into his hands. — —

At last the final day of his holidays and the morning of his departure came round. At Elisabeth's request her mother allowed her to accompany her friend to the post-cart, which had its station a few streets away from her abode. As they stepped out of the door, Reinhardt gave her his arm, and went on his way beside the slim girl in silence. The nearer they approached their destination, the more he felt that he had something he must say to her before he took farewell of her for so long, something on which all the worth and all the happiness of his future life depended, and yet he could not find the word to break the spell. This tormented him; he walked more and more slowly.

"You'll be too late," she said, "it has struck ten on St. Mary's already."

But he did not go any the quicker. At last he stammered: "Elisabeth,

you will not see anything of me at all for two years — — I wonder will you be still as fond of me as you are now, when I come here again?"

She nodded and looked him friendly in the face. — "Why, I've stood up for you," she said after a pause.

"For me? Whom had you to do that with?"

"With my mother. We were talking a long time about you last night after you had gone. She declares that you are not so good as you used to be."

Reinhardt was silent a moment; then he took her hand in his and said, looking earnestly into her childish eyes, "I am still just as good as I used to be; I can assure you. Do you believe it, Elisabeth?"

"Yes," she said. He let go her hand and hurried with her along the last street. The nearer their parting approached, the happier his face became; he went almost too quickly for her.

"What's the matter with you, Reinhardt?"

"I have a secret, a beautiful secret!" he said, and looked at her with sparkling eyes. "When I come again in two years, you'll learn what it is then."

Meanwhile they had reached the post-cart; there was still time enough. Reinhardt took her hand once again. "Farewell," he said, "farewell, Elisabeth. Don't forget."

She shook her head. "Farewell," she said. Reinhardt got in, and the horses started.

As the post-cart turned the corner of the street, he saw her beloved form once more, as she slowly retraced her way.

A Letter

Nearly two years later Reinhardt was sitting at his lamp amidst books and papers expecting a friend who joined him in his studies. Some one came up the stairs. "Come in!" — It was his landlady. "A letter for you, Mr. Werner!" And she went away again.

Since his visit home, Reinhardt had never written to Elisabeth, and had received no more letters from her. This one was not from her either; it was his mother's writing. Reinhardt broke the seal and began to read, and soon came to the following:

"At your age, my dear child, almost every year has a character of its own: for youth is always changing for the better. Here, too, there have been many changes, which will most likely disappoint you at first, if I used to read your mind aright. Yesterday Erich was accepted by Elisabeth at last, after he had asked her twice in the last three months and been refused. She could not make up her mind to do so before; but now she has done it after all; she is not so young now, either. The wedding is to be soon, and then her mother will go away with them."

Immensee

More years had passed. — On a descending shady forest-road, one warm spring afternoon, a young man with a strong, sun-burnt face was journeying. With his earnest grey eyes he looked anxiously ahead, as if he expected at last to see some change in the monotonous road, a change which, however, refused to appear. At last a waggon came slowly up from the hollow. "Hullo, my good friend!" shouted the wanderer to the peasant who accompanied it, "Is this the right way to Immensee?"

"Keep straight on," the man answered, and pulled at his hat.

"Is it still far from here?"

"Your honour is close to it. Not half a pipe of tobacco, and you are at the lake; the mansion-house is just beside it."

The peasant drove on; the other proceeded more quickly under the trees. After a quarter of an hour the shade on his left hand suddenly came to an end; the road led along a cliff above which the tops of centenarian oaks scarcely reached. Away beyond them a wide, sunny landscape opened. Far beneath lay the lake, calm, dark-blue, surrounded almost completely by green, sun-bathed woods; only at one spot they separated, and afforded a distant prospect that stretched away until it too was closed by blue mountains. Almost opposite, amid the green foliage of the woods, lay something like snow; it was fruit-trees in blossom, and from them on the high shore rose the mansion-house, white with red tiles. A stork flew from the chimney and circled slowly over the water. — "Immensee!" exclaimed the traveller. It seemed almost as if he had now reached his journey's goal; for he stood motionless, and gazed over the tree-tops at his feet to the other shore where the reflection of the mansion-house floated, gently swaying, on the water. Then he suddenly continued his way.

The road now went almost precipitously down the hill, so that the trees below him again afforded shade, but at the same time hid the outlook upon the lake, which glittered only now and then through the gaps in the branches. Soon the road sloped gently upwards again, and now the woods on right and left disappeared; and in their place thickly-embowered vineyards stretched along the road; on either side of it stood fruit-trees in blossom, full of humming bees in clouds. A stalwart man in a brown overcoat came towards the traveller. When he was almost up to him, he waved his cap and cried in a clear voice, "Welcome, welcome, brother Reinhardt! Welcome to Immensee!"

"God greet you, Erich, and thanks for your welcome!" the other cried to him in return.

With that they had met and shaken hands. "Is it really you?" said Erich, as he scanned his old school-fellow's grave face.

"To be sure, it is I, Erich, and you are your old self; only you look rather more cheerful than you used to do."

A glad smile made Erich's honest features look more cheerful than ever at these words. "Yes, brother Reinhardt," he said, shaking his hand again; "but since then I have drawn the great prize in the lottery, you know." Then he rubbed his hands and cried contentedly, "This will be a surprise! She does not expect him, never in the world!"

"A surprise?" questioned Reinhardt, "for whom?"

"For Elisabeth."

"For Elisabeth! Have you not told her of my visit?"

"Not a word, brother Reinhardt; she does not expect you, nor does her mother. I wrote to you quite secretly, so that her pleasure might be all the greater. You know, I used always to have such little plans of my own."

Reinhardt became thoughtful; his breath seemed to grow more difficult the nearer they came to the farm. On the left side of the road the vineyards had in their turn ceased, and gave place to an extensive kitchen-garden, which ran down almost to the shore of the lake. The stork had meanwhile settled and was stalking solemnly among the vegetable-beds. "Hullo!" cried Erich, clapping his hands, "the long-legged Egyptian is stealing my short pea-stakes again!" The bird rose slowly, and flew on to the roof of a new building that lay at the end of the kitchen-garden, and the walls of which were covered with trained peach and apricot-trees. "That is the distillery," said Erich, "I erected it only two years ago. My departed father rebuilt the steading; the dwelling-house was already built by my grandfather. So we are always getting a trifle further on."

With these words they entered a spacious square, which was enclosed on the sides by the farm-buildings, and at the end by the mansion-house, from either wing of which stretched a high garden-wall. Behind this could be seen the lines of dark yew-hedges, and here and there lilacs drooped their flowery branches into the yard. Men with their faces heated by sun and toil were crossing the square, and saluted the friends, while Erich in reply shouted to this one and that an order or a question about their work. — Now they arrived at the house. A lofty, cool hall received them, at the end of which they turned to their left into a somewhat darker side-passage. Here Erich opened a door and they entered a spacious garden-room, which was suffused on two sides with green twilight from the creepers that overhung the windows that faced them; between these, however, two high, wide-open folding-doors admitted the full brightness of the spring sun, and afforded a view on to a garden with trim flower-beds and tall, steep hedges, divided by a straight broad path, through which one looked out upon the lake and beyond it to the woods on the opposite shore. As the friends entered, the draught bore a flood of perfume towards them.

On a terrace before the garden-door sat a white, girlish woman's form. She rose up and went to meet the arrivals: but halfway she stopped as if rooted to the ground, and stared motionless at the stranger. He held

out his hand to her with a smile. "Reinhardt!" she exclaimed, "Reinhardt! Good heavens, it is you! — We have not seen each other for a long time."

Not for a long time," he said, and could say no more; for, at the sound of her voice, he felt a touch of actual pain at his heart; and, as he looked at her, there she stood before him, the same graceful, delicate form to whom he had bidden farewell in his native town years before.

Erich had remained at the door, his countenance beaming with joy. "Well, Elisabeth," he said, "confess, you did not expect him, never in the world!"

Elisabeth looked at him with sisterly eyes. "You are so kind, Erich!" she said.

He took her slim hand caressingly in his own. "And now that we have him," he said, "we'll not let him go so soon. He has been so long away; we must make him feel at home again. Just look how foreign and distinguished he has grown."

Elisabeth stole a shy glance at Reinhardt's countenance. "It is only because of the time we have been separated," he said.

At this moment her mother, with a key-basket on her arm, entered the door. "Mr. Werner!" she said, when she caught sight of Reinhardt; "as welcome as unexpected a guest." — And now the conversation pursued an even course of questions and answers. The women settled to their work, and, while Reinhardt partook of the refreshments provided for him, Erich, having lighted his big meerschaum-pipe, sat smoking and gossiping at his side.

Next day Reinhardt had to accompany him out of doors; to the fields, into the vineyards, into the hop-garden, into the distillery. Everything was in good order; the hands who worked in the fields and at the stills all looked healthy and contented. At midday the family assembled in the garden-room, and the day was then spent according as his host's leisure allowed, more or less in common. Only the hours before supper and the first of the forenoon did Reinhardt remain working in his room. For some years past he had been collecting the sayings and songs that survived among the people, wherever he could procure them, and was now proceeding to arrange his collection and, where possible, to enrich it with new local observations. — Elisabeth was always gentle and friendly; she received Erich's unvarying attentiveness with a gratitude that was almost humble, and Reinhardt could not help thinking sometimes that the merry child of old had given promise of a less silent woman.

Since the second day of his stay he had been in the habit of taking an evening walk on the shore of the lake. The way led close under the garden. At the end of it, on a projecting knoll, stood a seat under tall birches; the mother had christened it the Evening Seat, because the place fronted the evening sun and was mostly used at that time for the sake of the sun-

set. — Reinhardt was returning from a walk along this road one evening when he was surprised by rain. He sought shelter under a lime-tree standing by the water's edge, but the heavy drops soon struck through the leaves. Soaked through, he made the best of a bad job, and slowly continued his way home. It was almost dark; the rain was falling more and more heavily. As he approached the Evening Seat he thought he could distinguish a white female form among the glimmering birch-stems. She was standing motionless, and, as he thought he could distinguish on his nearer approach, turned in his direction, as if she was waiting for some one. He thought it was Elisabeth. But, as he hastened to reach her and return with her through the garden into the house, she slowly turned away and vanished amid the dark alleys. He could not make it out; he was almost angry with Elisabeth, and yet he doubted whether it had really been she; but he was shy of questioning her; indeed, on his return he did not go into the garden-room, just because he did not by any chance wish to see Elisabeth entering through the garden-door.

It was my Wilful Mother

A few days afterwards, it was getting on for evening and the family was sitting together, as it usually did at this time, in the garden-room. The doors were standing open; the sun had already sunk behind the woods on the other side of the lake.

Reinhardt was asked to show them some folk-songs which had been sent to him that afternoon by a friend living in the country. He went up to his room, and returned in a minute with a roll of papers, which appeared to consist of neatly-written single sheets.

They sat down round the table, Elisabeth at Reinhardt's side. "We'll read them as they come," he said, "I've not looked through them myself yet."

Elisabeth unrolled the manuscript. "Here is music," she said, "you must sing it, Reinhardt."

So he began by reading some Tyrolese *Schnaderhüpferl*, occasionally singing the words to the merry airs in an undertone. A general merriment overcame the little company. "But who made those pretty songs?" asked Elisabeth.

"Tut," said Erich, "you can tell that by the sound of them; travelling tailors and hairdressers and such-like frivolous rascals."

Reinhardt said: "Nobody makes them at all; they grow, they fall from the sky, they fly over the land like thistle-down, hither and thither, and are sung in a thousand places at once. We find our own most intimate doings and sufferings in these songs; it is as if we had all had a share in them."

He took another sheet. "I stood high on the mountains . . ."

"I know that one!" cried Elisabeth. "Do strike up, Reinhardt! I'll help you." And then they sang that air which is so mysterious that one can hardly believe it to be of human invention; Elisabeth with her somewhat veiled contralto accompanying the tenor.

Meanwhile her mother was sitting busied with her sewing, Erich had folded his hands and was listening devoutly. When the song came to an end, Reinhardt silently laid the sheet on one side. — From the lake-shore the tinkling of the cow-bells came up through the evening calm; they listened unconsciously; then they heard a boy's clear voice sing

I stood high on the mountains
And looked into the vale . . .

Reinhardt smiled. "Do you hear? You see, it goes from mouth to mouth."

"It is often sung in these parts," said Elisabeth.

"Yes," said Erich, "it's Kaspar the herd-boy: he's driving the heifers home."

They listened a while longer until the tinkling was lost behind the farm-buildings. "They are primitive melodies," said Reinhardt; "they sleep in the depths of the forests; God knows who discovered them."

He drew out a fresh sheet.

By this time it had become darker; a red evening-glow lay like foam upon the woods across the lake. Reinhardt unrolled the sheet, Elisabeth laid her hand upon one edge of it and looked on it with him. Then Reinhardt read:

It was my wilful mother
Who made me choose the other;
Where once my joy was set,
My heart must now forget:
To this it has no mind.

To her I made my moan,
And said she ill had done;
What once was my fair fame
Is now become my shame.
Where can I turn?

For joy and pride my gain
Is only grief and pain.
Rather I'd beg my bread
And o'er the brown heath tread,
Were I but free again.

During the reading Reinhardt had felt an almost imperceptible trembling of the paper; when he had finished, Elisabeth gently pushed back her chair and went silently into the garden. A look from her mother followed

her. Erich made to go after her, but her mother said, "Elisabeth has something to do outside." So the matter dropped.

But outside the evening was falling darker and darker over garden and lake, the moths flitted whispering past the open doors, through which the scent of flowers and shrubs came more strongly every moment; from the water rose the croaking of the frogs, under the windows a nightingale sang, and deeper in the garden another; the moon looked over the trees. Reinhardt gazed for a while at the spot where Elisabeth's slender form had disappeared among the walks; then he rolled up his manuscript, said good-night to those in the room, and went through the house down to the water.

The forests stood silent and cast their shadow far out on the lake, while its centre lay in the murky twilight of the moon. Now and again a faint air rustled through the trees; but it was no wind, only the breathing of the summer-night. Reinhardt made his way along the bank. A stone-cast from the land he could distinguish a white water-lily. All at once he was possessed by the desire to see it close at hand; he threw off his clothes and stepped into the water. It was shallow, sharp plants and stones cut his feet, and it was long before he got deep enough to swim. Then suddenly his footing failed him, the water swirled over his head, and it was some time before he came again to the surface. Thereupon he plied hand and foot and swam round in circles until he made sure of the spot where he had entered the water. Soon he saw the lily, too again; it lay solitary between its broad, shining leaves. — He swam slowly out, sometimes raising his arms out of the water, so that the drops as they trickled down glistened in the moonlight; but it seemed as if the distance between him and the flower remained the same; only the shore, each time he looked round, lay more dimly in the haze. He did not give up his undertaking, however, but continued to swim stoutly on in the same direction. At last he arrived so near the flower that he could clearly distinguish its silvery petals in the moonlight; but at the same moment he felt himself caught as if in a net, the smooth stalks reached up from the bottom and twined about his naked limbs. The unknown water lay black about him, behind he heard the leaping of a fish; it suddenly felt so uncanny in the strange element that he violently wrenched himself loose from the tangle of the plants, and in breathless haste swam to land. As he looked back from there on to the lake, the lily lay distant and solitary as before upon the black depths. — He dressed and went slowly back to the house. When he stepped from the garden into the room, he found Erich and Elisabeth's mother busy preparing for a little business journey which they had to make next day.

"Wherever have you been so late at night?" her mother inquired of him.

"I?" he returned; "I wanted to visit the water-lily; but nothing came of it."

"That's a likely story!" said Erich. "What on earth had you to do with the water-lily?"

"I used to know it once on a day," said Reinhardt; "but that was long ago."

Elisabeth

The next afternoon Reinhardt and Elisabeth were rambling together on the other side of the lake, now among the woods, now on the high cliffs of the shore. Elisabeth had been instructed by Erich to show Reinhardt, during his own and her mother's absence, the finest views in the immediate neighbourhood, especially that of the farm itself from the other shore. They were now going from one point to another. At last Elisabeth was tired, and sat down in the shade of overhanging branches; Reinhardt stood facing her, leaning against a tree-trunk; just then he heard the cuckoo calling deeper in the wood, and it suddenly came to his mind that it had all happened exactly like this once before. He looked at her with a whimsical smile. "Shall we look for strawberries?" he said.

"It is not the time for strawberries," she said.

"But it will be soon."

Elisabeth shook her head and said nothing; then she stood up, and the two continued their ramble; and, as she walked thus beside him, his glance was cast on her again and again; for she moved exactly as if she were carried along by her clothes. He often involuntarily lagged a step behind, that he might have a full view of her. So they came to an open heath-clad space with a view far out over the country. Reinhardt stooped down and plucked something from the plants growing on the ground. When he looked up again, his countenance wore an expression of passionate grief. "Do you know this flower?" he said.

She looked at him inquiringly. "It is an Erica. I have often gathered it in the forest."

"I have an old book at home," he said; "I used to write all sorts of songs and sayings in it; but have not done so for a long time. Between its leaves there is another Erica; but it is withered now. Do you know who gave it to me?"

She nodded dumbly; but cast down her eyes and kept them fixed on the plant that he held in his hand. So they stood a long time. When she raised her eyes to him, he saw that they were full of tears.

"Elisabeth," he said, "behind those blue mountains lies our youth. What has become of it?"

They said no more; they went silently side by side down to the lake. The air was close; in the west black clouds were rising. "There's going to be thunder," said Elisabeth, as she quickened her pace. Reinhardt nodded in silence, and the two hastened along the beach until they reached their boat.

During the crossing Elisabeth let her hand rest on the gunwale of the boat. He looked at her as he rowed; but she looked past him into the distance. So his eyes travelled down and rested on her hand; and the pale hand betrayed what her face had concealed from him. He saw on it that faint trace of secret grief which so readily takes a woman's fair hands, hands that by night rest on an aching heart. — When Elisabeth felt his eye upon her hand, she let it droop slowly overboard into the water.

When they arrived at the farm, they found a knife-grinder's wheel in front of the mansion-house; a man with black hanging locks was treading industriously at the wheel and humming a gipsy melody between his teeth, while a dog in harness lay panting beside it. In the hall a girl clad in rags with pretty but haggard features was standing, and stretched out her hand begging to Elisabeth. Reinhardt felt in his pocket; but Elisabeth was before him, and hastily emptied the whole contents of her purse into the beggar-girl's open hand. Then she turned hastily away, and Reinhardt could hear her sobbing as she went up the steps.

He was going to detain her, but bethought himself, and remained behind on the steps. The girl was still standing in the hall, motionless, her alms in her hand. "What else do you want?" asked Reinhardt.

She drew herself up. "I want nothing more," she said; then, turning her head round to him, and staring at him with her wild eyes, she went slowly to the door. He cried a name; but she was not listening; with bowed head, her arms crossed on her breast, she walked away across the yard.

For I must perish,
Perish alone!

An old song rang in his ears, his breath stopped; a moment, then he turned away and went up to his room.

He sat down to work, but could not command his thoughts. After trying for an hour to do so in vain, he went down to the family room. There was no person there, only the cool, green twilight; on Elisabeth's work table lay a red ribbon that she had worn round her neck that afternoon. He took it in his hand, but it hurt him, and he laid it down again. He could not rest; he went down to the lake and unmoored the boat; he rowed across and retraced once again all the paths that he had gone with Elisabeth shortly before. When he returned to the house again, it was dark; in the yard he met the coachman, who was taking the carriage-horses out to graze; the travellers had just returned. As he entered the hall, he heard Erich pacing up and down in the garden-room. He did not go in to him; he stood still a moment, then went softly up the stairs to his room. Here he seated himself in the arm-chair at the window; he pretended to himself that he wished to hear the nightingale that was singing below in the yew-hedge; but he heard only the throbbing of his own heart.

Downstairs in the house everything became quiet, the night passed on, he did not perceive it.— He sat thus for hours. At last he stood up and leaned at the open window. The night-dew dripped among the leaves, the nightingale had ceased to sing. Gradually the deep blue of the night-sky was suffused by a pale yellow glow in the east; a fresh wind sprang up and fanned Reinhardt's heated brow; the first lark soared rejoicing into the air. — Reinhardt turned suddenly and stepped to the table; he felt for a pencil, and, when he had found one, he sat down and wrote a few lines with it on a blank sheet of paper. When he had finished writing, he took his hat and stick, and, leaving the paper behind, carefully opened the door and went downstairs to the hall. — The morning twilight still lingered in every corner; the great house-cat stretched itself on the door-mat and rubbed its back against the hand that he unconsciously held out to it. But out in the garden the sparrows were already twittering from the branches and telling all that the night was gone. Just then he heard a door open upstairs in the house; some one came down the stairs, and when he looked up he saw Elisabeth before him. She laid her hand upon his arm, she moved her lips, but he could hear no words. "You are not coming back again," she said at last. "I know it, do not deny it; you are never coming back again."

"Never," he said. She let her hand fall and said no more. He went across the hall to the door; then he turned round once more. She was standing motionless on the same spot, and looking at him with lifeless eyes. He took one step forward and stretched out his arms towards her. Then with an effort he turned away and went out of the door. — Outside, the world lay in the fresh morning-light, the dew-pearls that hung on the gossamer glistened in the first rays of the sun. He did not look behind; he walked hastily away, and the silent farm sank farther and farther behind him, and before him rose up the great, wide world.

The Old Man

The moon no longer shone through the window-panes, it had become dark; but the old man still kept sitting with folded hands in his arm-chair and looking before him into the vacancy of the room. Gradually the black twilight around him changed to his eyes into a broad, dark lake; one black expanse lay behind another, each deeper and more distant, and on the last, so distant that his old man's eyes could hardly catch it, floated solitary among broad leaves a white water-lily.

The door opened and a bright beam of light fell into the room. "It is a good thing you came, Brigitte," said the old man. "Just set the lamp on the table."

Then he in turn drew his chair up to the table, took one of the open books and buried himself in studies to which he had once devoted the strength of his youth.

France

INTRODUCTION

THERE is scarcely any time during the entire period of French literature, from the formation of the language to the present day, when stories were not written or recited or sung in France. The earliest literary epochs teemed with *Fabliaux*, *Chansons de geste*, *Lays*, miraculous, devotional, and profane stories. The earliest of the independent short tales were the *Fabliaux*, the first of which dates from the year 1159, and the last from 1340. Most of these, like the *Chansons de geste* and the *Lays*, were anonymous. During the late Renaissance writers like Marguerite de Navarre and Rabelais, Saintré, Noël du Faïl and fifty others, applied themselves to collecting the old material, as well as to depicting contemporary manners and persons in their realistic and romantic stories.

In the Seventeenth Century Sorel and Camus, D'Alcripé and Tallement des Réaux, continued the short tale as a literary form, while Mlle. de Scudéry did much to popularise the long-winded sentimental novel. In the following century Voltaire and Marmontel were supreme in the realm of the philosophical or moral tale, a form that was popular throughout Europe and in England.

With the coming of the Nineteenth Century the French Romantics found the short novel an agreeable medium for the creation of atmosphere and character. Gérard de Nerval, Alfred de Vigny, Alfred de Musset, and Charles Nodier, excelled in the writing of the *Nouvelle;* Prosper Mérimée created the masterpiece *Carmen*, which remains to this day one of the greatest of all short novels. Balzac and George Sand, Théophile Gautier and a host of others, pointed the way to the succeeding writers, who delighted in the opportunities and limitations of the short novel form.

The modern French writers have made of the *nouvelle* an art form quite as perfect as the short story.

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE

NOTHING is known of the author of this charming love-romance. It has come down to us in a single Thirteenth-Century MS. In form it is what is called a *Chante-fable*, or *Cante-fable*, "designed for recitation, with illustrative gesture, to the accompaniment of viol and pipes." The story is similar to the (originally) Byzantine tale of *Flore and Blanchefleur*.

The present version was made, especially for this collection, by the editor.

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE

WHO wisheth to hear a song that will bring solace to the ear of a captive — the song of two children, Aucassin and Nicolette, and of the trouble that was his lot, and the great deeds he did for his love? The song is sweet, and the words fair, meet for hearing, and graceful. There is none so sore troubled or lost in thought but will be cured by hearing it, and his heart beat faster. It is a charming song.

Now it is related of Count Bougars de Valence how he waged war against Count Garin de Beaucaire, a war that was so great and marvelous and so full of deaths that day ne'er dawned but he was close by the portals and walls of the town, a hundred knights at his side, and ten thousand foot-soldiers and mounted men. He burned the land of the Count and laid waste that which he had inherited, and sent his men to their death. Count Garin de Beaucaire was old and weak, surviving beyond his time. No heir had he, neither son nor daughter, save one boy, of whom I shall relate. Aucassin was his name; pleasant and fair he was to see, tall and with shapely limbs. His hair was yellow, and full of little ringlets that curled; his eyes were gray and full of merriment; his face was bright and gracious, his nose well set. He was comely in all ways, and there was no evil in him, nothing but what was good. But he was so overcome by all-conquering love that he had no wish to become a knight nor to bear arms, nor engage in tourneys, nor to do what it was right and fitting that he should do.

Thus spake to him his father: "Son, put on thy armor, mount thy horse, protect thy land and give aid to thy followers. If they see thee with them, they will be better able to defend themselves and what is theirs, thine own property and mine."

"Why," answered Aucassin, "dost thou address me thus? I would that God ne'er grant me aught I ask if I take horse as knight, or engage in

battle with other knights to strike or be struck by them, unless thou allowest me to have Nicolette, my sweet friend, whom I love so deeply."

"My son," quoth his father, "that cannot be. Put the girl out of thy mind, for she is a slave-girl from a foreign land: the Viscount purchased her of the Saracens, and brought her here to stay in this town, keeping her after having had her baptised. Soon he intendeth to give her to some youth who will honorably support her. What hath this to do with thee? If thou desirest a wife I will procure for thee the daughter of a king or a count. Thou mayest have the daughter of the wealthiest man in France, if thou wouldst."

"Alas, my father," answered Aucassin, "there is no earthly honor too great for my sweet Nicolette. Were she even Empress of Byzantium or Germany, or Queen of France or England, that would mean little enough for her, she is so lovely and charming and endowed with grace."

Now it is sung: Aucassin lived in the great castle of Beaucaire, though his heart was ever with his sweet friend Nicolette. Little careth he for his father's censure, or the harsh words of his mother. "Weep not, fool, the livelong day, for Nicolette is bright and happy: she is only a slave girl from Carthage, brought hither from the Saracens. If thou wilt have a wife, choose one of noble blood." "Oh, mother, Nicolette is so lovely: I care for naught else but her. She is slender and fair, and fills my heart. Love hath made her my equal."

Now it is related that when Count Garin de Beaucaire perceived he was unable to dissuade Aucassin from his love for Nicolette, he went to the Viscount, his vassal, and thus said to him: "Send Nicolette, thy god-daughter, away from here, Sir Count. Cursed be the country whence she was brought to this place, since through her I lose Aucassin, who refuseth to become a knight and to do whatsoever befitteth a knight's station. Know ye that if I lay hands on her, I will quickly have her burned; and thyself beware, for thou art now in grave and fearful peril."

"My lord, it grieveth me much," the other made answer, "that Aucassin cometh to speak with the girl, whom I have purchased, and brought up, and had baptised. I would in faith give her to some young man who will honorably support her. With all this thy son Aucassin hath nothing to do. Seeing it is thy wish and command, I will send her so far away that Aucassin shall never more look upon her."

Said Count Garin: "Be wary, for great harm might easily befall thee in this thing."

Thereupon they parted.

The Viscount was a wealthy man, who owned a fine palace that stood within a park. Nicolette, his god-daughter, he had put in a room on an upper floor, and given her an old woman as companion and guard. He sent to them bread and meat and drink, and all things that they required. Upon the door he set a seal, that none might enter it, or leave. But there

was a window looking out upon the garden — though only a small one, — and through this could they breathe the fresh air.

Now it is sung: Nicolette is close confined in a vaulted chamber, covered with carvings and cunningly painted. The girl rested her elbow at the marble casement; gold was her hair, and her eyebrows delicately bowed; bright and lovely shone her face. Never was so sweet a maid before. From her room she watcheth the roses growing in the garden, and heareth birds sweetly singing. Yet was she lonely. 'Alas,' she cried, 'how piteous to put a girl in such evil plight! Aucassin, my liege-lord, dear friend, desire of my heart: see what hath been done to me because thou lookest upon me not without love. I have been immured in this room, and condemned thus. But I will fly hence, by the Lord, Son of Our Lady!'

Now it is related that Nicolette was shut fast within her room. It was rumored far and wide that she had been conveyed far away; by some it was said that she had gone out of the country, and by others that Count Garin de Beaucaire had put her to death. Though some may have rejoiced in the news, it was not so with Aucassin. So he went to the Viscount, and thus addressed him:

"Viscount, what hast thou done with my sweet friend Nicolette, whom I love most dearly of all who are in the world? Hast thou taken her away, and hidden her from my eyes? If I should die of this, be sure that thou shalt pay for it with thy blood. It were but just, seeing that I should then suffer death at thy hands, for thou hast taken from me what I love most in all the world."

"Put this, fair sir," the Viscount made answer, "from thy mind: Nicolette is a slave girl I brought here from a distant land. I paid the Saracens for her; I have nourished her myself and had her baptised. I have given her sustenance, and one day it is my wish to give her to some youth who will honorably support her. Thou hast naught to do with this matter: marry, I pray thee, the daughter of some count or king. What, indeed, would it avail thee if thou wert to become her lover, and brought her to thy bed? Little wouldst thou gain, since thy soul would be tormented in Hell eternally, and never wouldst thou gain Heaven?"

"What would I do in Heaven? I care not to go there. I would have only my sweet friend Nicolette, whom I love so deeply. In Heaven are only these I will tell thee of: old priests, aged cripples and the halt, who everlastingly by day and by night crouch before altars and in the crypts of churches; they who wear threadbare cloaks and old garments; the naked, the shoeless; they who are diseased, who perish of hunger and thirst, cold, and misery. Such are they who enter into Heaven, and with them have I naught to do. I will go down into Hell, since to Hell go the poets and goodly knights slain in tournaments and in great battles — strong archers and good men. With them rather will I go. There go lovely ladies with their friends and their wedded husbands. There too go all

the gold and silver and ermine and costly furs; the minstrels and likewise the musicians — all the happy folk of the world. With all these will I go, if only I have my sweet friend Nicolette by my side."

"In sooth," quoth the Viscount, "thou speakest idle words: never more shalt thou set eyes upon the girl. If by chance thou and she were to speak together and thy father hear on it, he would burn both myself and the girl in a fire. Thou hast good reason to fear."

"This lieth heavy on my heart," Aucassin made answer. And with these words, he left the Viscount, sorrowing greatly.

Now it is sung: Thus, sad and sorrowing, Aucassin went his way. His sweet friend was gone, and none might bring him solace. He made his way home to the palace, mounted the stairs and went to his room; there, all alone, he fell to weeping for his lost love. 'Nicolette so sweet and fair, sweet are the ways thou treadest, sweet thy smiles and thy words, sweet was our being together, sweet thy kisses; yet this is the end! I am dead, alas, now that my love is taken from me, my sweet sister, my dearest!'

Now it is related that whilst Aucassin was in his room sorrowing over Nicolette, Count Bougars de Valence, desiring to end the war, sped on, and ordering his pikemen and cavalry in array, approached the castle with intent to capture it, and a great tumult and outcry arose. Knights and other armed men seized weapons and hurried to the gates and upon the walls to defend the castle; and the merchants mounted the walls to defy and throw darts upon the enemy. In the thick of the loud and perilous fray, Count Garin de Beaucaire made his way to the room where Aucassin lay sorrowing for his sweet friend Nicolette, whom he loved so deeply.

"Coward!" cried he, "Thou seest thy fair castle besieged and stormed. Thou art eternally shamed. Know that if thou losest this castle thou art stripped of all. Put on thy light armor, my son, take thy horse, fight for thy land, give succor to thy men, and hasten into battle. No need is there to smite a man or be smitten in turn. Only if thy men see thee in their midst, they will the more valiantly defend their property and their bodies, thy land and my land. This canst thou easily do, since thou art strong and hardy. It is but fitting."

"What sayest thou, my father?" answered Aucassin. "May God grant me naught I ask of Him if I become a knight, or ride upon a horse, or enter the fray to smite a knight or be smitten — unless thou givest me Nicolette, my sweet friend, whom I love so deeply."

"My son," made answer the father, "this cannot be. Liefer would I lose my heritage and go stripped of all, than that thou shouldst have her, either as thy mistress or as thy wife." With such words he turned to depart without saying farewell. But Aucassin stayed him, and said:

"My father, I will make a bargain with thee."

"What bargain wilt thou make, my dear son?"

"I will take up arms and go into battle, on this condition, that if God taketh me through it without harm, thou wilt allow me to look upon my sweet friend Nicolette — nay, only long enough that I may have two or three words with her and give her one kiss."

"This will I promise," made answer the father. And because of this pact Aucassin was greatly joyed.

Now it is sung: Aucassin had liefer have the kiss than an hundred thousand gold pieces in his chests. His esquire came to him at his bidding, and put on all his armor. A coat of mail he put on, and a hauberk, fastened a helmet upon his head and a gold-hilted sword to his side. His charger was brought to him. Then took Aucassin his lance and shield, and looked at the stirrups. At last, a splendid sight with plume waving, he mounted and set spurs to the horse, and while thinking of his sweet friend, he went past the gate and on fearlessly to the battle.

Now it is related that Aucassin was armed, and mounted on his horse. Oh, God, how fair flashed the shield about his neck; the helmet upon his head, and the belt on his left thigh. The lad was tall and hardy, slim and fair to see; the horse he rode was large and swift of foot; right fiercely did he prance out from the gate. Imagine not that Aucassin sought oxen or cattle as spoils, nor to strike others or be struck by them. On such things his mind was not fixed. His thoughts were with Nicolette, his sweet friend, so that it seemed as though she were present with him; and the reins fell loose in his hands, and he struck no blow. His horse, under the prick of the spur, carried him into the fray, in the very midst of the battle. Blows were struck at him from all sides, and he was taken prisoner, and despoiled of his lance and shield. And they led him off a captive, and consulted amongst themselves as to what manner of death should be meted out to him. And Aucassin heard them and cried out,

"Oh, God, these my mortal enemies who hold me captive will soon strike off my head. When that is done, never again may I hold converse with my sweet friend Nicolette, whom I love so deeply. But I have a stout sword and my horse is fresh. May God not preserve her if I fail to fight valiantly for her sake!" He was a powerful and sturdy lad, and his charger a spirited animal. Drawing his sword, he struck right lustily about him, and smote helmets and gauntlets, facepieces and arms, dealing ruin about him like a wild boar brought to bay by dogs in the forest. He laid low ten knights and wounded seven others, and cut his way out, escaping swiftly, sword in hand.

When the Count Bougars de Valence heard that his men intended to hang his enemy Aucassin, he hastened to the spot where he was. But Aucassin met him, and never did he escape. Sword in hand, Aucassin smote the Count so hard upon his helmet that it fell in pieces. The Count was so sore wounded that he slipped to the ground, wherefrom Aucassin lifted him up and led him a prisoner, and delivered him up to his father.

"Behold, father," quoth Aucassin, "the enemy that hath brought war and woe upon thee! For twenty years hath this war lasted: none was there to bring it to an end."

"Dear son," answered his father, "far better are deeds like this than idle dreaming."

"Preach not to me, father, but abide by thy agreement."

"What agreement, dear son?"

"Faith, father, hast thou forgotten? I, at least, do not forget: it is here in my heart. Was it not agreed by thee that if I took up arms and went into battle, and God saw me through it safe, thou wouldst permit me to see Nicolette, my sweet friend, time enough to speak two or three words with her, and give her one kiss? Deal thou honestly with me; such was our agreement."

"Before God," quoth his father, "never shall I abide by such an agreement. If the girl stood here I would have her burned, and thou thyself wouldst stand in danger."

"Is this all thou hast to say?" asked Aucassin.

"In God's name, ay."

"Gray hairs," answered Aucassin, "go not well with lying words. — Count de Valence," quoth the lad, "art thou my prisoner?"

"Sir," answered the Count, "it is so in sooth."

"Let me have thy hand."

"As thou desirest." And each took the other's hand.

"Give me," quoth Aucassin, "thy oath that to thy dying breath thou wilt not let one day pass but that thou dealest evil to my father — to his goods or his body — so far as thou art able."

"Oh, God, jest not so with me," replied the Count. "I pray thee, fix a ransom for me. Whatever thou demandest, silver or gold, fine horses or costly furs, dogs or hawks, shall be paid thee."

"Art thou not in sooth my prisoner?"

"I am, my lord."

"Then may God forsake me always, but I shall cut off thy head unless thou swearest the oath I told thee."

"In God's name," quoth the Count, "I swear the oath thou wishest." So he sware, and Aucassin set him upon a steed, and took him to a safe place, himself riding beside him.

Now it is sung: When the Count Garin saw that his son loved only Nicolette, he forthwith set Aucassin in a prison with a marble vault, deep under the ground. There was Aucassin little inclined to happiness: he moaned and filled his dungeon with mournful sounds, as I tell thee here. 'Oh, Nicolette,' cried he, 'my white lily, sweetest girl that ever sat in a bower, sweet as the wine that foameth in a goblet! One day a pilgrim came from Limousin, who was sore afflicted, and lay on a bed in deep pain, nigh unto death. And thou camest in to him, so pure and bright,

and raising thy dress trimmed with ermine, showed thy limbs to him. And a miracle befell, and the pilgrim rose from his bed, and taking his cross in his hand, made his way off to his own land again. Thou lily, sweet are the ways thou treadest, sweet thy smiles and thy words, sweet was our being together, and sweet thy kisses. All the world must forsooth love thee. For thy sake am I cast into this dungeon alone. For thy sake I await death, that will make an end of me — for thy sake, my sweet friend.'

Now it is related that Aucassin was put into prison, while Nicolette was shut in her room. It was in May, and the time was warm, the days long and the nights calm and serene. One night as Nicolette lay awake in her bed watching the bright moonlight through her window, she gave ear to the song of the nightingale in the park. She was thinking of her dear Aucassin, whom she loved so deeply, and likewise of Count Garin de Bougars, her dreaded enemy, and feared lest her hiding-place should be discovered to him, and she be killed shamefully. Making sure that the old serving-woman who stayed with her was fast asleep, she got up, and wrapped herself in a fair silk mantle, the finest she had; then she took the sheets from off her bed, and the towels she used after bathing, tied them together to make a long rope, and securing it to the window frame, she descended by the rope into the park. Taking hold of her dress with both hands, she trussed it up to avoid wetting it with the dew on the grass, and made her way through the park. Her hair was like bright gold, curled in little locks, her eyes smiling and blue, her face lovely to look upon, her lips redder than roses or berries in summer; her teeth small and white; and her breasts showed like nuts, so firm under her clothing. So slender was her waist that two hands could span it. As she walked over the daisies underfoot, they seemed well-nigh black against the whiteness of her flesh. As she reached the gate she unlocked it and went forth into the streets of Beaucaire, being careful to keep within the shadows, since the moon was bright. So she went to the castle, where her beloved Aucassin lay imprisoned. The tower was supported here and there with great timbers, and amongst these Nicolette concealed herself, wrapping her mantle close round her body. Putting her head close to a cranny in the wall, which was old and decrepit, she heard Aucassin wailing within, sorrowing pitifully for his sweet friend. After she had listened for a time, she began to speak.

Now it is sung: Bright-faced Nicolette, intent within this walled place, heard her dearest weep and knew his woe, and she spoke her sorrow, saying, 'Aucassin, dear brave Aucassin, why should thy heart bleed for the sake of a Saracen maid? She may never be thy wife, for thy father hates her, and mine own people hate me! Alack, what can I do? Naught save to cross the sea and go to some distant land.' Thereat she cut a golden lock from her head; but Aucassin caught sight of it shining through the dark-

ness of his cell, and at her request he took it, kissed it and thrust it in the bosom of his dress, and wept again for his love.

Now it is related that when Aucassin heard Nicolette say in her song that she would fare to some distant land, he was overcome with grief.

"My sweet friend," quoth he, "far be this thought from my mind, else wouldst thou kill me. The first man who saw thee might seize thee and make thee his own. If thou wert to belong to any other man save myself alone, no dagger would be needed to enter my heart and be the death of me. Nay, I would wait for no dagger: I would throw myself against the nearest wall or rock, and dash out my brains. Far better were it thus to meet an ignominious death than have thee belong to any other man."

"I doubt, Oh Aucassin," quoth the girl, "that thy love for me is less great than thy words show, and I believe that my love is greater than thine."

"Ah, sweet friend," answered Aucassin, "how can thy love for me be so great? Women love not men as men love women. A woman's love lies in a flash of her eye, in the fairness of her breast, in the toe of her foot; but man's love lieth deep in his heart, whence it cannot be uprooted."

As Aucassin and Nicolette were thus disputing together, the town guard came into the street, bearing swords under their mantles, for Count Garin had given orders to kill Nicolette should she be taken captive. The watchman on the wall saw them approaching, and heard them talking of Nicolette, and threatening to put her to death.

"It is, in faith," said he, "a piteous thing that so beautiful a maid should meet death. I would give much if I could secretly warn her that she might escape. My master Aucassin would surely die if she died. This were a pitiable thing."

Now it is sung: The watchman was brave and ingenious, and bethought him of some device whereby he might sound a warning. So he sang a song and made a fair rhyme, 'Faithful lady, gracious, bright, with golden hair, lips that smile and eyes that beam; 'tis easy to know that ye two love each other. But ye be in peril, for the net is spread and the trap set. The hunters approach, clad in mantles and bearing knives hidden upon them. May the quarry haste away ere the hunters spy her.'

Now it is related that Nicolette said to the watchman: "May the souls of thy father and thy mother find rest, for that thou hast so kindly sent me warning. God willing. I will hide me, and seek His protection." Now, drawing her mantle closely round her, she stooped low between the columns whilst the guards passed on. Then she bade farewell to Aucassin and pressed on to the walls of the castle, which was mended here and there with wood. She climbed over a small wall, and found herself between it and the moat. She peered down and saw that the ditch was deep and perilous. Her serving-woman was sore afraid.

"Dear God," cried she, "My neck would in truth be broken were I to

fall; yet if I remain here shall I be taken prisoner on the morrow, and burned. Yet mayhap were it fitter that I perish here than be shown to all in the public square." But, making the sign of the cross, she let herself down into the ditch, though bruising her lovely feet and hands, which had never yet felt pain nor wound; they were so hurt that blood sprang from the wounds in many places. But because she was mightily afraid she felt no manner of pain. She came forth from the ditch even more grievously hurt than she went down, yet she called to mind that if she delayed she would be killed. Finding at hand a sharpened stick of wood, which some one who defended the castle had cast down in that place, she used it and made a step for herself, and then other steps, and at last with much labor she came to the top of the ditch.

The wood was distant only two flights of an arrow, and was about thirty leagues long and thirty leagues wide. In it were a multitude of wild animals and serpents, which she greatly feared. But remembering that if she were to fall into the hands of men she would be brought back to the city and burned, she pressed on.

Now it is sung: The fair and loving Nicolette climbed out of the ditch and went on her way. First she knelt and prayed for help from the Lord Christ: 'Our Father, Oh King, I know not where to go but into the wood where terrible things are, hungry beasts with savage tusks and claws. Yet were I to remain here, I would be taken by men at daybreak, and they would mistreat me and burn me in a fire. Such a death I will not have, by God's help. If I must meet death, better were it that I trust myself to the wild boar than to men. I choose the lesser of these evils.'

Now it is related that Nicolette was very sorrowful, and gave herself thus into the keeping of God, and entered forthwith into the wood, yet keeping well near the edge of it, that she might escape the animals and serpents. When sleep descended upon her she hid herself under thick shrubbery and slept soundly until the sixth hour of the morning. Then came shepherds and tenders of cattle from the town, watching their beasts between the wood and the stream. The shepherds stopped near to a crystal spring that rippled by the fringe of the wood, spread cloaks on the ground, and there ate their bread. Nicolette was awakened as they were eating by the sound of their laughter and the singing of birds, and went quickly to the spring.

"Good people," she spake to them, "God save you."

"God save thee as well," quoth one who was readier of speech than the others.

"Fair young man," quoth she, "dost thou know Aucassin, son of Count Garin of this place?"

"Ay, we know him well."

"God preserve thee, fair youth," quoth she, "tell Aucassin that there is fair game for him in this wood. Should he find her he would not, I think,

part with any fragment of her for a hundred gold pieces, or even five hundred — or for anything that men can give."

The maid was so fair to behold that their hearts were troubled. Then he who had spoken before, cried, "I to tell him? Alas, harm will come to him who sayeth to Aucassin what thou tellest me. Thou speakest strange things and not the truth, for there is not in this wood a deer, or lion, or boar, of which a fragment is worth more than two or three pennies, if that much; and thou spokest of five hundred pieces of gold. Woe to him who giveth credence to this tale, or repeateth it. Thou art a fairy — dangerous company for us. Go thy way."

"Dear youth," answered the maid, "do as I ask thee. The game I speak of is the only remedy for the sickness that afflicteth Aucassin. I have here five pennies in my wallet; take them and deliver my message. In three days' time must he seek out this game, and if he find her not, never will his wound be healed."

"Faith, I will take thy money," answered the youth, "and if he come this way by chance, I will deliver thy message. But never will I go to seek him out."

"Be that as God willeth it," quoth Nicolette. Then she bade farewell to the shepherds, and went on.

Now it is sung: As ye have heard, Nicolette bade farewell to the shepherds, and cautiously went deep into the wood, under the leafy boughs; over the grass fared she and found at last a forest path that led to a forking of the ways, seven of them, branching out like fingers on the hand. She recalled there her heart's desire, and sought to find out whether her love were true to her. She gathered supple boughs and reeds and leaves of oak, and lilies, and builded her a bower, and made an oath by God that should her lover come to this place and not stop to think of her in its shade, he would not be her true love.'

Now it is related that Nicolette built her a hut, as ye have heard; charming and pretty it was, and well fitted out, with tapestries of flower and leaf. She hid herself a little way off in the bushes to see what Aucassin would do.

Meantime it was known by all that Nicolette was lost. It was averred by some that she had been carried away, and by others that Count Garin had had her killed. Aucassin suffered bitter torture, though others had joy of the news. His father took him from prison, and sent forth letters bidding the knights and ladies thereabout to attend a magnificent banquet, thinking in this wise to cure Aucassin of his melancholy. But when the banquet was liveliest, Aucassin sat downcast near the musicians. He laughed not at the gaiety, for that she whom he loved was not among the women.

One knight marked his woe, and going to him, said, "Aucassin, I too have suffered from thy disease. I can give thee sound counsel if thou wilt give ear."

"My thanks, sir knight," said Aucassin, "good counsel would I have before all things."

"Mount thy horse then, and go into the wood, amongst the flowers and bushes and the singing birds. Mayhap thou wilt hear some thing to gladden thy heart."

"I thank thee, sir knight," answered Aucassin, "I will do this thing." And he left the hall straightway, when no one was looking, and went to the stable. He put saddle and bridle on the beast, mounted and went from the castle. He rode on until he came to the wood, and by chance arrived at the third hour after noon by the spring where the shepherds were. They sat there on cloaks spread over the sward, eating bread and making much mirth.

Now it is sung: Martin, Robin and Esmeret sat about the spring, happy shepherds were they; and Frulin, Jacques, and Aubriet. 'God save Aucassin,' cried one, 'our gallant young lord; and keep, too, the fair maid with blue eyes and golden hair who gave us pennies to buy sweets and knives, staves and horns, and fruit, flutes and pipes. God save them.'

Now it is related that as Aucassin heard the song of the shepherds he thought on his sweet friend Nicolette, whom he loved so deeply. It came to him that she must have passed that way, and he set spurs to his charger, and soon came up to the shepherds.

"Fair youths, the blessing of God upon ye!"

"And upon thee," answered the shepherd with the ready tongue.

"Fair youths, sing me again the song ye were singing as I came up."

"Nay, we will not sing it. Evil will come to him who singeth it to thee, fair sir."

"Fair youths," answered Aucassin, "do ye know me?"

"Ay, we know well that thou art Aucassin, our young lord. We be not thy men, but the Count's."

"Fair youths, sing the song once again, I beseech ye!"

"By the Wounded Heart, fine words indeed! Shall I sing if I will not? Save Count Garin himself, not the wealthiest man in all the country would dare drive my sheep and cattle and cows from his field or pasture, for fear of losing his eyes. Why then should I sing for thee, if I wish it not?"

"God preserve ye, my children, now will ye do this for me. Take these ten pennies I have in my wallet."

"Sir, we will accept the money, but sing for thee will I not, for I have sworn not to; but I will relate it to thee in prose, if thou wilt have it so."

"As God pleaseth," quoth Aucassin. "Better in prose than to have no tale at all."

"We were in this glade, sir, between six of the clock and nine in the morning, eating by the spring, as we are doing now. A maid came by, passing fair, so fair indeed we thought her a sprite, for she brought light

into the wood. She gaveth us money and we agreed that if thou shouldst come this way we should tell thee that thou must hunt in this wood, since here is such game that thou wouldst not let go a fragment of it for five hundred silver pieces, nor aught that any man can give. There is in this game a cure so potent that it will make well again thy wound. In three days must thou capture the game, for should she not be found in that time, never more shalt thou see her. Go then and give chase, or not, as thou wilt."

"Fair youths, ye have said enough," quoth Aucassin, "may God point out to me the path."

Now it is sung: The heart of Aucassin was full when these words were spoken, for they had been sent him by his beloved. Forthwith he mounted his charger again, bade farewell and pushed on into the dark wood, saying to himself, 'Sweet and good Nicolette, I search for thee in this wood, not the stag nor the boar, but thee. I am on the trace of thy graceful body, thy blue eyes, thy soft laughter. This is my heart's desire. Ah, could I but find thee! God grant it, my sweet friend.'

Now it is related that Aucassin rode off into the wood, seeking for Nicolette. Swiftly his horse carried him, nor was he spared by the thorns and sharp boughs, for his clothing was so tattered that the parts of it that were least harmed could scarce cling to his body. The blood ran from his arms and thighs and legs in forty places — at the very least in thirty places — and one might have followed him by the blood he shed on the grass. But his thoughts dwelt lovingly on Nicolette, his sweet friend, and he felt no pain. All day long he sought for her in the wood, but found no trace. Toward the end of the day he began to weep for that he had heard nothing. He was riding at random along an ancient road covered with grasses, and looking up on a sudden he perceived a young man standing there, marvelous tall and ugly. Large was his head and blacker than smoked meat, and his eyes set so wide apart that one might have put his hand between them; his cheeks were huge and his nose flat, with large nostrils. His lips were redder than raw meat; his teeth foul and discolored. The shoes he wore were made of ox-hide, and his leggings were supported by ropes tied above the knees. His mantle was of rough material. He stood there leaning upon an enormous club. Aucassin spurred on his horse, but shook with fear.

"God save thee, brother," quoth Aucassin.

"And thee, sir."

"What doest thou here?" inquired Aucassin.

"Is that thy concern?"

"Nay," Aucassin made answer, "I asked thee with no idea of doing thee ill."

"Why dost thou weep?" inquired the stranger, "and make such lamentation? Were I as rich as thee, naught in the wide world could make me weep."

"Dost thou know me?" asked Aucassin.

"Well do I know thou art Aucassin, the Count's son. If thou wilt tell me why thou weepest, I will tell thee my business here."

"I will tell thee, and willingly," quoth Aucassin. "This morning I came hither to hunt in the wood, and brought with me the fleetest white hound in the world. I have lost him, and therefore I weep."

"Hearken!" quoth the other, "By the Holy Heart, thou mournest thus for a filthy dog! A pitiful fellow is he who thinketh well of thee! There is no wealthy man hereabout who would refuse thee fifteen or twenty dogs — with thy father's leave — and do it willingly. Now I have good cause to weep and wail."

"And why so, comrade?"

"My lord, I will tell thee: I was hired by a wealthy farmer to drive the plough, with four oxen. I lost Roget three days ago, and have been seeking him without food or drink, for I dare not return to the village, where I would be cast into prison; for money have I none, to make good the loss. All I have in the world are the rags I wear. My old mother had naught save a worn-out mattress, and that they have taken from her. She lieth now on the bare straw. This grieveth me more than my own loss. Money cometh and money goeth, and I may win to-morrow what I lose to-day. My ox will I pay for when I am able. It is not for this that I weep. Yet thou wailest over a filthy dog. May sorrow be his lot who pitieth thee!"

"Yea, thou consolest well, brother. Blessings on thee! How much was thy ox worth?"

"Twenty sous the villein asks for it; not one sou less will he take."

"Give me thy hand," quoth Aucassin, "and take these twenty sous that I have in my wallet. These will pay for the ox."

"My lord," quoth the fellow, "I thank thee. May God help thee find what thou seekest."

And they parted the one from the other, Aucassin riding onward.

Fair and quiet was the evening, and he made his way along the path, and came at last to the crossing of the seven paths, where Nicolette had builded her bower. Fair it was and dainty, and well furnished. It had a floor and a top to it, and carpets of fresh flowers. No fairer abode could there be. Aucassin brought his horse suddenly to a stop. Moonlight came down upon the bower.

"Sweet God," quoth Aucassin, "this is where Nicolette was, my sweet friend. She hath builded this place with her own hands. I love her for that the spot is fair, and I will dismount and refresh myself here this night." So taking his feet from the stirrups, he dismounted from his tall charger. His mind was so full of Nicolette, his sweet friend, that in dismounting he fell against a mighty rock, and dislocated his shoulder. Though sore wounded, he did all that was needful, and secured the horse to a bush with the hand that was not hurt. Then he pulled himself along

the ground and entered the bower. Through a crevice inside he could see the stars shining in the heavens overhead. One of them was far brighter than the others, and he sang

'Oh, small star I look upon, going toward the moon, love lies up yonder in a golden bower, and fair-haired Nicolette hath been set up there by God to be the evening star. Whate'er be my lot, I would I were with thee now. Ah, who should deserve this, king or emperor though he be! Thou shinest from afar, oh lovely star.'

Now it is related that when Nicolette heard Aucassin sing these words, she ran to him from the spot where she lay hidden not far off. She came into the bower, and threw her arms round Aucassin's neck, and kissed him and held him tight in her embrace.

"My sweet friend, I am joyed to find thee!"

"And joyed am I, sweet friend, to find thee!" And they kissed, and held fast to each other. Their happiness was fair to see.

"My sweet friend," quoth Aucassin, "just now my shoulder hurt me sore, but in holding thee I have no pain at all."

Nicolette forthwith looked at the wound, and saw that the shoulder was out of joint; yet so skilful was she in treating it with her white hands, that with the help of God, who aideth all lovers, the shoulder was healed. Then Nicolette plucked fresh flowers and leaves and tearing a piece from her dress made a splint and tied it round Aucassin's shoulder.

"Sweet friend, Aucassin," quoth she, "we must counsel together what is to be done. Should thy father search the wood on the morrow and I be taken, I shall sure be killed — whatever happen to thee."

"Ah, sweet friend, that would grieve me more than my own death. Yet with my help thou shalt never fall into his power." Aucassin mounted upon his horse again, and took Nicolette with him, holding her fast in his arms; and as he rode he kissed her often. Riding thus, they came out of the wood into the open.

Now it is sung: Aucassin, the lover, Nicolette's heart's desire, rode forth from the wood, holding his sweetheart in his arms. Tightly he held her, and kissed her on the chin and on the forehead, on the eyes and on the mouth. Said she to him in her wisdom, "My love, do not so, but haste thee on: we have no home here in France. Shall we not seek one in Rome or Byzantium?' 'My love, it matters not to me — in valley or wood, on earth or on the sea. I care not where we ride, so thou art with me.' Thus riding, the lovers sped on past castle and town, and rocks and lawns. At length, in the morning, they came to cliffs going down to the waterside, and heard the waves breaking, and they stopped by the side of the sea.

Now it is related that Aucassin dismounted and stood on the beach with Nicolette, as ye have heard it told. In one hand he held the bridle and in the other Nicolette, and they walked along the beach. Not long after, they saw a vessel that was manned by traders of that country. It

stood close to the shore, and Aucassin waved to the sailors, and they came in to him. They made a bargain that the sailors should take them on the vessel. After they had set sail a great tempest came on, and drove the ship from one place to another, until at last they reached a distant country, where they cast anchor, and the harbor was that of Torelore castle. When they inquired country it was, they were told that it belonged to the King of Torelore. Aucassin asked what sort of man the king was, and inquired if there was a war, and he was told, "A great war indeed!"

Then Aucassin bade farewell to the traders, and they wished him well. Girding on his sword, he mounted his horse, and setting his sweet friend in the saddle before him, he rode forth and came to the castle. He inquired where he might find the king. To this question, answer was made that the king was in child-bed.

"And where is his wife?"

It was told him that she was with the army, having taken with her all the soldiers thereabout. Aucassin was amazed to hear these things. When he reached the palace door he dismounted and had Nicolette hold the bridle of the horse. Then he went up the stairs, with sword drawn, and sought the room where the king was lying.

Now it is sung: Aucassin, so eager in his search, at last found the room and entered, and stood before the bed where the king lay. He gazed upon him, and upon the bed, and quoth he, 'Why, old fool, dost thou do this?' And the king answered, 'I am a mother. In a month's time when I am strong again, I will hear Mass, as my fathers were wont to do. Put light armor on me then, and I will go forth to war again.'

Now it is related that when Aucassin heard these words from the king he snatched the covers from the bed and scattered them about. Seizing a stick from a corner of the room, he came back to the bed and beat the king well-nigh to death.

"Dear my lord," cried the king, "what dost thou ask of me? Art thou demented to treat me so in my own castle?"

"By the Holy Heart," quoth Aucassin, "evil son of a shameless woman, I will smite thee with my sword unless thou swearest that henceforth no man shall again lie in childbed in thy kingdom."

The king sware to this, and after he had sworn, Aucassin said to him, "My lord, have thy wife, who is now with the army, brought to me."

"That I will," answered the king. So he mounted upon his horse, and Aucassin mounted on his, leaving Nicolette in the Queen's room. Aucassin and the king rode forth and came to the Queen, who was engaged in battle, with roasted apples and eggs and cheeses for soldiers. Aucassin looked on amazed.

Now it is sung: Aucassin draweth in his rein, and sate staring from his place in the saddle, at the field of battle, and brought courage to the

fighters. Mushrooms had been brought to the field, and baked apples; and fresh cheeses were used as arrows. He who made the stream murkiest was given the prize. Brave Aucassin looked on at these mighty deeds and laughed aloud.

Now it is related that when Aucassin saw these things he inquired of the king, "My lord, are these thine enemies?" And the King made answer, "Ay, my lord."

"Wouldst thou that I take revenge on them?"

"Yea, willingly," answered the king.

Then Aucassin, sword in hand, dashed into the thick of battle, and striking this way and that, he smote down many, and when the king saw what ruin Aucassin made, he caught hold of his bridle.

"Cease, fair lord," quoth he, "be not so cruel to them."

"Was it not thy wish," asked Aucassin, "that I should take revenge on thine enemies?"

"My lord," answered the king, "thou art too hasty. It is not our way to deal death, nor is it the way of our enemies."

The fighters thereupon left the field of battle, and Aucassin and the king made their way back in triumph to Torelore Castle. The inhabitants of this land counselled the king to send Aucassin away from the country, and advised him to give Nicolette in marriage to his own son, since she appeared to be of noble birth. But when Nicolette heard of this, she was troubled, and sang:

"Simple people of a simple King, thou thinkest a girl a thing of little moment. But my sweetheart considereth me comely, and I know that naught on earth — the music of harps, dancing, merriment, all the lovely things in life — are comparable to the pleasure I have with him."

Now it is related that Aucassin stayed at Torelore Castle in comfort and ease, and with him Nicolette, his sweet friend. While the time slipped by thus pleasantly, a great number of Saracens came in vessels from over the sea, and laid siege to the castle, and stormed it, and captured it in the end. They won great store of booty, and carried off many of the inhabitants, men and women, into bondage. Nicolette and Aucassin were amongst these. Aucassin was bound hand and foot and carried into one ship, and Nicolette into another.

And a great storm arose at sea, and drove the ships apart, and the ship wherein Aucassin lay was carried by winds and waves to a great distance, and at last was driven ashore near the Castle of Beaucaire. When the people came to the wreck they found Aucassin, and knew who he was. They were happy to find their lord again after so long a time, for Aucassin had tarried at Torelore Castle for the space of three years. In the meantime both his father and his mother had died. So they took him to Beaucaire Castle, and did homage to him, and he ruled the land peacefully.

Now it is sung: Aucassin is returned again to Beaucaire, where his vassals do homage to him, and he rules in peace. But he is bowed down with sorrow for lack of the sweet face of one person, sorrowing more for her than for the death of his parents. 'My dear love, my sweet lady, there is naught more precious I would seek on sea or land than thee.'

Now it is related that the ship wherein Nicolette was carried off belonged to the King of Carthage, her father. She had twelve brothers, all of them kings or princes in the land. When these men saw her loveliness, they paid great attention to her, and respected her. They asked her many questions about her family, since she seemed to be of noble birth. Yet could she tell them very little, only that she was a child when she had been sold as a slave. The sailors rowed the ship until they reached the port of Carthage, and there cast anchor. Nicolette looked out upon the castle and the land thereabout, and it came to her memory that she had been in that place in other days; that she had been carried off thence when a child, though not so young but that she recalled she was daughter of the King of Carthage. Yea, she had once been cared for and nourished in this selfsame city.

Now it is sung: The fair maid Nicolette set foot in this land, and looked upon the city walls, its palaces and buildings. 'Ah, how vain,' she sighed, 'all earthly pomp, since a king's daughter can be stripped bare and offered as a slave in the market. Oh, Aucassin, dear brave heart, how sweet is thy love to me, how dear! Ah, would all danger were past, and thou in my arms. Would we were here together, locked in each other's embrace, thy kisses falling upon my face!'

Now it is related that when the King heard Nicolette speak thus, he threw his arms round her neck. "My dear," quoth he, "Say in sooth who thou art, and fear me not."

"My lord," quoth the maid, "I am in sooth daughter of the King of Carthage. I was taken hence when I was but a child, fifteen years ago."

When those about heard these words, they were sure that Nicolette spake the truth. Great was their joy, as they brought her, with ceremony fitting a princess, to the palace. It was their desire that she be given for husband some king from the country thereabout, but she had no wish to marry. She stayed in the palace three or four days, wondering how she might escape and go in search of her Aucassin.

Thereupon she procured a viol and learned to play it. One night just before it had been decided to give her in marriage to a wealthy Saracen potentate, she left her bed and stole away. She wandered and came to the sea port. There she abode with a woman who lived in a house near the water. She colored her hair and her face with some herb, and changed her fair whiteness until it became dark of hue. Making for herself garments and hose, she disguised herself as a minstrel. Finding a sailor, she easily persuaded him to take her, together with her viol, aboard his vessel.

Sails were spread and the ship set out and over the sea, and came at last to Provence. Nicolette came ashore, with her viol, and went through the land and came at last to Beaucaire Castle, where Aucassin was.

Now it is sung: Aucassin was sitting one summer's day with his lords and friends in the Castle of Beaucaire, and he dreamed of Nicolette, the scent of flowers and song of birds aiding him. Right sorrowful was he, and left the company, wishing to be alone with his tears. There came to him Nicolette in the garb of a minstrel. She drew her bow over her viol, and sang these words: 'Hearken to me, lords and ladies of high and low degree. For thy pleasure I sing of that good knight Aucassin, and his sweet friend Nicolette. So great was their love that when his family would have killed her, he followed after her. Saracens took them from the castle where they lay, and carried them over the sea. To Aucassin I know not what happened. But Nicolette, the dear and desirable, her father loves: he is the famous King of Carthage. He seeketh to give her a husband at this moment: a lord, a Caliph, a Sultan, or Emir. But the girl will have none of these, since she loveth a youth, Aucassin, with whom she hath plighted her troth. She hath sworn an oath to marry none but Aucassin, never to lie by the side of any baron or other.'

Now it is related that when Aucassin heard the song that Nicolette sang, his heart was glad, and he took her aside and inquired of her:

"Dear friend, knowest thou of this Nicolette whose song thou hast sung?"

"In sooth, my lord, I do. I know her to be the most faithful and modest and lovely of maids. She is daughter of the King of Carthage, who captured her at the same time Aucassin was captured, and took her to his city; there he learned beyond a doubt that she was in sooth his child, and he had great joy thereat. It was his wish to give her a husband, one of the mightiest rulers in Spain, but she had liefer be strangled or burned alive than marry him, no matter how wealthy he might be."

"My sweet friend," quoth Count Aucassin, "if thou wilt go back to that land and tell Nicolette to come hither and speak with me, I would give thee greater wealth than thou wouldst dare ask, or take from me. For love of this maid I have not chosen me a wife, however well-born she might be. I wait rather, for never shall I wed, save only Nicolette. Could I know where she is, then would I seek her out."

"My lord," answered the maid, "if thou wilt do such things, I will find her for thy sake — and hers as well, for she is dear to me."

Aucassin promised, and made her a present of twenty pieces of gold. She bade him farewell, while he wept at the thought of Nicolette.

"My lord," quoth she, "be not so disconsolate. I will bring the girl to this place shortly, and thou shalt look upon her with thine own eyes." And Aucassin was greatly joyed at these words.

Then Nicolette left him, and went to another part of the town, to the abode of the Viscountess — since the Viscount, her god-father, was dead. She stayed there, and told all to the Viscountess, who remembered her, and knew that the girl was indeed Nicolette, whom she had earlier brought up and nourished. And the lady had a bath prepared, and Nicolette stayed with her for the space of a week. The maid found the herb called celandine, and used it as a wash, and was as white and fair as she had ever been. She dressed herself in a beautiful silk garment that belonged to the Viscountess, and sat herself on a magnificent cushion of embroidered goods. Then she gave word that her sweet friend Aucassin should be summoned, and he was summoned, and when the Viscountess came to him in the palace she found him lamenting that Nicolette was so long away from him; and the Viscountess said:

"Be not so disconsolate, Aucassin. Come with me, and I will show thee what is dearest to thee in the whole world: Nicolette is arrived from a distant land, seeking her lover."

And Aucassin was overjoyed.

Now it is sung: When he heard that his sweet lady was in Beaucaire, Aucassin rose and went to the house of the Viscountess, and straight to the room where sat his Nicolette, who when she laid eyes on him, felt such joy as no mortal ever felt before. Quickly she stood up and swiftly flew to him. When he saw her, Aucassin opened wide his arms and took her to him, and held her fast in a loving embrace. He kissed her on the eyes and on the face. Thus did these two spend the night, and in the morning, with great pomp, Aucassin had her crowned Countess of Beaucaire. Such was the joy these lovers had, and Aucassin and Nicolette lived long and happily.

Thus endeth this song, with the pealing of marriage bells.

VOLTAIRE

(François-Marie Arouet)

(1694–1779)

VOLTAIRE was born at Paris in 1694. Though his father intended that he should take up the law, he was a poor student: he was interested in writing, and at an early age had shown an aptitude for verse. Indeed he was sent into exile because certain libelous lines of his had given offence to influential persons. He spent the greater part of his life outside his native land.

For more than half a century he was the dominating figure in French literature. He was immensely prolific as dramatist, essayist, poet, novelist, and political writer. Of his brilliant tales and novels, *Zadig* is probably the most entertaining. While it is essentially a philosophical satire, it is, quite apart from its implications, a well-told tale.

The translation here used is by an anonymous hand, reprinted from *Voltaire's Romances*, New York, 1885.

ZADIG

I. THE BLIND OF ONE EYE

THERE lived at Babylon, in the reign of King Moabdar, a young man, named Zadig, of a good natural disposition, strengthened and improved by education. Though rich and young, he had learned to moderate his passions. He had nothing stiff or affected in his behavior. He did not pretend to examine every action by the strict rules of reason, but was always ready to make proper allowances for the weakness of mankind. It was a matter of surprise, that, notwithstanding his sprightly wit, he never exposed by his raillery those vague, incoherent, and noisy discourses; those rash censures, ignorant decisions, coarse jests, and all that empty jingle of words which at Babylon went by the name of conversation. He had learned, in the first book of Zoroaster, that self-love is a foot-ball swelled with wind, from which, when pierced, the most terrible tempests issue forth. Above all, Zadig never boasted of his conquests among the women nor affected to entertain a contemptible opinion of the fair sex. He was generous and was never afraid of obliging the ungrateful; remembering the grand precept of Zoroaster, "When thou eatest, give to the dogs, should they even bite thee." He was as wise as it is possible for man to be; for he

sought to live with the wise. Instructed in the sciences of the ancient Chaldeans, he understood the principles of natural philosophy, such as they were then supposed to be; and knew as much of metaphysics as hath ever been known in any age, that is, little or nothing at all. He was firmly persuaded, notwithstanding the new philosophy of the times, that the year consisted of three hundred and sixty-five days and six hours, and that the sun was the centre of the solar system. When the principal magi told him, with a haughty and contemptuous air, that his sentiments were of a dangerous tendency, and that it was to be an enemy to the state to believe that the sun revolved round its own axis, and that the year had twelve months, he held his tongue with great modesty and meekness.

Possessed as he was of great riches, and consequently of many friends, blessed with a good constitution, a handsome figure, a mind just and moderate, and a heart noble and sincere, he fondly imagined that he might easily be happy. He was going to be married to Semira, who, in point of beauty, birth, and fortune, was the first match in Babylon. He had a real and virtuous affection for this lady, and she loved him with the most passionate fondness. The happy moment was almost arrived that was to unite them for ever in the bands of wedlock, when happening to take a walk together toward one of the gates of Babylon, under the palm trees that adorn the banks of the Euphrates, they saw some men approaching, armed with sabres and arrows. These were the attendants of young Orcan, the minister's nephew, whom his uncle's creatures had flattered into an opinion that he might do everything with impunity. He had none of the graces nor virtues of Zadig; but thinking himself a much more accomplished man, he was enraged to find that the other was preferred before him. This jealousy, which was merely the effect of his vanity, made him imagine that he was desperately in love with Semira; and accordingly he resolved to carry her off. The ravishers seized her; in the violence of the outrage, they wounded her, and made the blood flow from a person, the sight of which would have softened the tigers of mount Imaus. She pierced the heavens with her complaints. She cried out: "My dear husband! they tear me from the man I adore!"

Regardless of her own danger, she was only concerned for the fate of her dear Zadig, who, in the meantime, defended himself with all the strength that courage and love could inspire. Assisted only by two faithful slaves, he put the cowardly ravishers to flight, and carried home Semira, insensible and bloody as she was.

"O Zadig," said she, on opening her eyes, and beholding her deliverer, "I loved thee formerly as my intended husband, I now love thee as the preserver of my honor and my life!"

Never was heart more deeply affected than that of Semira. Never did a more charming mouth express more moving sentiments, in those glowing words inspired by a sense of the greatest of all favors, and by the most

tender transports of a lawful passion. Her wound was slight, and was soon cured. Zadig was more dangerously wounded. An arrow had pierced him near his eye, and penetrated to a considerable depth. Semira wearied heaven with her prayers for the recovery of her lover. Her eyes were constantly bathed in tears; she anxiously waited the happy moment when those of Zadig should be able to meet hers; but an abscess growing on the wounded eye, gave everything to fear. A messenger was immediately dispatched to Memphis, for the great physician Hermes, who came with a numerous retinue. He visited the patient, and declared that he would lose his eye. He even foretold the day and hour when this fatal event would happen.

"Had it been the right eye," said he, "I could easily have cured it; but the wounds of the left eye are incurable."

All Babylon lamented the fate of Zadig, and admired the profound knowledge of Hermes. In two days the abscess broke of its own accord, and Zadig was perfectly cured. Hermes wrote a book, to prove that it ought not to have been cured. Zadig did not read it: but, as soon as he was able to go abroad, he went to pay a visit to her in whom all his hopes of happiness were centered, and for whose sake alone he wished to have [illegible]. Semira had been in the country for three days past. He learned on the road, that that fine lady, having openly declared that she had an unconquerable aversion to one-eyed men, had the night before given her hand to Orcan. At this news he fell speechless to the ground. His sorrows brought him almost to the brink of the grave. He was long indisposed; but reason at last got the better of his affliction; and the severity of his fate served even to console him.

"Since," said he, "I have suffered so much from the cruel caprice of a woman educated at court, I must now think of marrying the daughter of a citizen."

He pitched upon Azora, a lady of the greatest prudence, and of the best family in town. He married her, and lived with her for three months in all the delights of the most tender union. He only observed that she had a little levity; and was too apt to find that those young men who had the most handsome persons were likewise possessed of the most wit and virtue.

II. The Nose

One morning Azora returned from a walk in a terrible passion and uttering the most violent exclamations.

"What aileth thee," said he, "my dear spouse? What is it that can thus have disturbed thee?"

"Alas!" said she, "thou wouldst have been as much enraged as I am, hadst thou seen what I have just beheld. I have been to comfort the young widow Cosrou, who, within these two days, hath raised a tomb to

her young husband, near the rivulet that washes the skirts of this meadow. She vowed to heaven, in the bitterness of her grief, to remain at this tomb whilst the water of the rivulet should continue to run near it."

"Well," said Zadig, "she is an excellent woman, and loved her husband with the most sincere affection."

"Ah!" replied Azora, "didst thou but know in what she was employed when I went to wait upon her!"

"In what, pray tell me, beautiful Azora? Was she turning the course of the rivulet?"

Azora broke out into such long invectives, and loaded the young widow with such bitter reproaches, that Zadig was far from being pleased with this ostentation of virtue.

Zadig had a friend named Cador; one of those young men in whom his wife discovered more probity and merit than in others. He made him his confidant, and secured his fidelity as much as possible by a considerable present. Azora, having passed two days with a friend in the country returned home on the third. The servants told her, with tears in their eyes, that her husband died suddenly the night before; that they were afraid to send her an account of this mournful event; and that they had just been depositing his corpse in the tomb of his ancestors, at the end of the garden. She wept, she tore her hair, and swore she would follow him to the grave. In the evening, Cador begged leave to wait upon her, and joined his tears with hers. Next day they wept less, and dined together. Cador told her, that his friend had left him the greater part of his estate; and that he should think himself extremely happy in sharing his fortune with her. The lady wept, fell into a passion, and at last became more mild and gentle. They sat longer at supper than at dinner. They now talked with greater confidence. Azora praised the deceased; but owned that he had many failings from which Cador was free.

During supper, Cador complained of a violent pain in his side. The lady, greatly concerned, and eager to serve him, caused all kinds of essences to be brought, with which she anointed him, to try if some of them might not possibly ease him of his pain. She lamented that the great Hermes was not still in Babylon. She even condescended to touch the side in which Cador felt such exquisite pain.

"Art thou subject to this cruel disorder?" said she to him with a compassionate air.

"It sometimes brings me," replied Cador, "to the brink of the grave; and there is but one remedy that can give me relief — and that is, to apply to my side the nose of a man who is lately dead."

"A strange remedy, indeed!" said Azora.

"Not more strange," replied he, "than the satchels of Arnou, against the apoplexy."

This reason, added to the great merit of the young man, at last determined the lady.

"After all," says she, "when my husband shall cross the bridge Tchinavar in his journey to the other world, the angel Asrael will not refuse him a passage because his nose is a little shorter in the second life than it was in the first."

She then took a razor, went to her husband's tomb, bedewed it with her tears, and drew near to cut off the nose of Zadig, whom she found extended at full length in the tomb. Zadig arose, holding his nose with one hand, and putting back the razor with the other.

"Madam," said he. "don't exclaim so violently against the widow Cosrou. The project of cutting off my nose is equal to that of turning the course of a rivulet."

III. The Dog and the Horse

Zadig found by experience, that the first month of marriage, as it is written in the book of Zend, is the moon of honey, and that the second is the moon of wormwood. He was some time after obliged to repudiate Azora, who became too difficult to be pleased; and he then sought for happiness in the study of nature.

"No man," said he, "can be happier than a philosopher, who reads in this great book, which God hath placed before our eyes. The truths he discovers are his own; he nourishes and exalts his soul; he lives in peace; he fears nothing from men; and his tender spouse will not come to cut off his nose."

Possessed of these ideas, he retired to a country house on the banks of the Euphrates. There he did not employ himself in calculating how many inches of water flow in a second of time under the arches of a bridge, or whether there fell a cube-line of rain in the month of the mouse more than in the month of the sheep. He never dreamed of making silk of cobwebs, or porcelain of broken bottles: but he chiefly studied the properties of plants and animals; and soon acquired a sagacity that made him discover a thousand differences where other men see nothing but uniformity.

One day, as he was walking near a little wood, he saw one of the queen's eunuchs running toward him, followed by several officers, who appeared to be in great perplexity, and who ran to and fro like men distracted, eagerly searching for something they had lost of great value.

"Young man," said the first eunuch, "hast thou seen the queen's dog?"

"It is a bitch," replied Zadig, with great modesty, "and not a dog." "Thou art in the right," returned the first eunuch.

"It is a very small she-spaniel," added Zadig; "she has lately whelped; she limps on the left fore-foot, and has very long ears."

"Thou hast seen her," said the first eunuch, quite out of breath.

"No," replied Zadig, "I have not seen her, nor did I so much as know that the queen had a bitch."

Exactly at the same time, by one of the common freaks of fortune, the finest horse in the king's stable had escaped from the jockey in the plains of Babylon. The principal huntsman, and all the other officers, ran after him with as much eagerness and anxiety as the first eunuch had done after the bitch. The principal huntsman addressed himself to Zadig, and asked him if he had not seen the king's horse passing by.

"He is the fleetest horse in the king's stable," replied Zadig; "he is five feet high, with very small hoofs, and a tail three feet and an half in length; the studs on his bit are gold, of twenty-three carats, and his shoes are silver of eleven penny-weights."

"What way did he take? where is he?" demanded the chief huntsman.

"I have not seen him," replied Zadig, "and never heard talk of him before."

The principal huntsman and the first eunuch never doubted but that Zadig had stolen the king's horse and the queen's bitch. They therefore had him conducted before the assembly of the grand desterham, who condemned him to the knout, and to spend the rest of his days in Siberia. Hardly was the sentence passed, when the horse and the bitch were both found. The judges were reduced to the disagreeable necessity of reversing their sentence; but they condemned Zadig to pay four hundred ounces of gold for having said that he had not seen what he had seen. This fine he was obliged to pay; after which, he was permitted to plead his cause before the counsel of the grand desterham, when he spoke to the following effect:

"Ye stars of justice, abyss of sciences, mirrors of truth, who have the weight of lead, the hardness of iron, the splendor of the diamond, and many of the properties of gold; since I am permitted to speak before this august assembly, I swear to you by Oromazes, that I have never seen the queen's respectable bitch, nor the sacred horse of the king of kings. The truth of the matter is as follows: I was walking toward the little wood, where I afterward met the venerable eunuch, and the most illustrious chief huntsman. I observed on the sand the traces of an animal, and could easily perceive them to be those of a little dog. The light and long furrows impressed on little eminences of sand between the marks of the paws, plainly discovered that it was a bitch, whose dugs were hanging down, and that therefore she must have whelped a few days before. Other traces of a different kind, that always appeared to have gently brushed the surface of the sand near the marks of the fore-feet, showed me that she had very long ears; and as I remarked that there was always a slighter impression made on the sand by one foot than by the other three, I found that the bitch of our august queen was a little lame, if I may be allowed the expression. With regard to the horse of the king of kings, you will be pleased to know, that walking in the lanes of this wood, I observed the marks of a horse's shoes, all at equal distances. This must be a horse,

said I to myself, that gallops excellently. The dust on the trees in a narrow road that was but seven feet wide, was a little brushed off, at the distance of three feet and a half from the middle of the road. This horse, said I, has a tail three feet and a half long, which, being whisked to the right and left, has swept away the dust. I observed under the trees that formed an arbor five feet in height, that the leaves of the branches were newly fallen, from whence I inferred that the horse had touched them, and that he must therefore be five feet high. As to his bit, it must be gold of twenty-three carats, for he had rubbed its bosses against a stone which I knew to be a touchstone, and which I have tried. In a word, from a mark made by his shoes on flints of another kind, I concluded that he was shod with silver eleven deniers fine."

All the judges admired Zadig for his acute and profound discernment. The news of this speech was carried even to the king and queen. Nothing was talked of but Zadig in the antichambers, the chambers, and the cabinet; and though many of the magi were of opinion that he ought to be burnt as a sorcerer, the king ordered his officers to restore him the four hundred ounces of gold which he had been obliged to pay. The register, the attorneys, and bailiffs, went to his house with great formality to carry him back his four hundred ounces. They only retained three hundred and ninety-eight of them to defray the expenses of justice; and then their servants demanded their fees.

Zadig saw how extremely dangerous it sometimes is to appear too knowing, and therefore resolved, that on the next occasion of the like nature he would not tell what he had seen.

Such an opportunity soon offered. A prisoner of state made his escape and passed under the windows of Zadig's house. Zadig was examined and made no answer. But it was proved that he had looked at the prisoner from this window. For this crime he was condemned to pay five hundred ounces of gold; and, according to the polite custom of Babylon, he thanked his judges for their indulgence.

"Great God!" said he to himself, "what a misfortune it is to walk in a wood through which the queen's bitch or the king's horse have passed! how dangerous to look out at a window! and how difficult to be happy in this life!"

IV. The Envious Man

Zadig resolved to comfort himself by philosophy and friendship for the evils he had suffered from fortune. He had in the suburbs of Babylon a house elegantly furnished, in which he assembled all the arts and all the pleasures worthy the pursuit of a gentleman. In the morning his library was open to the learned. In the evening his table was surrounded by good company. But he soon found what very dangerous guests these men of let-

ters are. A warm dispute arose on one of Zoroaster's laws, which forbids the eating of a griffin.

"Why," said some of them, "prohibit the eating of a griffin, if there is no such animal in nature?"

"There must necessarily be such an animal," said the others, "since Zoroaster forbids us to eat it."

Zadig would fain have reconciled them by saying:

"If there are no griffins, we cannot possibly eat them; and thus either way we shall obey Zoroaster."

A learned man, who had composed thirteen volumes on the properties of the griffin, and was besides the chief theurgite, hasted away to accuse Zadig before one of the principal magi, named Yebor, the greatest blockhead, and therefore the greatest fanatic among the Chaldeans. This man would have empaled Zadig to do honor to the sun, and would then have recited the breviary of Zoroaster with greater satisfaction. The friend Cador (a friend is better than a hundred priests) went to Yebor, and said to him:

"Long live the sun and the griffins; beware of punishing Zadig; he is a saint; he has griffins in his inner court, and does not eat them; and his accuser is an heretic, who dares to maintain that rabbits have cloven feet, and are not unclean."

"Well," said Yebor, shaking his bald pate, "we must empale Zadig for having thought contemptuously of griffins, and the other party for having spoken disrespectfully of rabbits."

Cador hushed up the affair by appealing to a person who had great interest in the college of the magi. Nobody was empaled. This lenity occasioned a great murmuring among some of the doctors, who from thence predicted the fall of Babylon.

"Upon what does happiness depend?" said Zadig; "I am persecuted by everything in the world, even on account of beings that have no existence."

He cursed those men of learning, and resolved for the future to live with none but good company.

He assembled at his house the most worthy men, and the most beautiful ladies of Babylon. He gave them delicious suppers, often preceded by concerts of music, and always animated by polite conversation, from which he knew how to banish that affectation of wit, which is the surest method of preventing it entirely, and of spoiling the pleasure of the most agreeable society. Neither the choice of his friends, nor that of the dishes, was made by vanity; for in everything he preferred the substance to the shadow; and by these means he procured that real respect to which he did not aspire.

Opposite to his house lived one Arimazes, a man whose deformed countenance was but a faint picutre of his still more deformed mind. His heart was a mixture of malice, pride, and envy. Having never been able to suc-

ceed in any of his undertakings, he revenged himself on all around him, by loading them with the blackest calumnies. Rich as he was, he found it difficult to procure a set of flatterers. The rattling of the chariots that entered Zadig's court in the evening, filled him with uneasiness; the sound of his praises enraged him still more. He sometimes went to Zadig's house, and sat down at table without being desired; where he spoiled all the pleasure of the company, as the harpies are said to infect the viands they touch.

It happened that one day he took it in his head to give an entertainment to a lady, who, instead of accepting it, went to sup with Zadig. At another time, as he was talking with Zadig at court, a minister of state came up to them, and invited Zadig to supper, without inviting Arimazes. The most implacable hatred has seldom a more solid foundation. This man, who in Babylon was called the *envious*, resolved to ruin Zadig, because he was called the *happy*. "The opportunity of doing mischief occurs a hundred times in a day, and that of doing good but once a year," as sayeth the wise Zoroaster.

The envious man went to see Zadig, who was walking in his garden with two friends and a lady, to whom he said many gallant things, without any other intention than that of saying them. The conversation turned upon a war which the king had just brought to a happy conclusion against the prince of Hircania, his vassal. Zadig, who had signalized his courage in this short war, bestowed great praises on the king, but greater still on the lady. He took out his pocket-book, and wrote four lines extempore, which he gave to this amiable person to read. His friends begged they might see them; but modesty, or rather a well-regulated self-love, would not allow him to grant their request. He knew that extemporary verses are never approved by any but by the person in whose honor they are written. He therefore tore in two the leaf on which he had written them, and threw both the pieces into a thicket of rose bushes where the rest of the company sought for them in vain. A slight shower falling soon after, obliged them to return to the house.

The envious man, who remained in the garden, continued to search, till at last he found a piece of the leaf. It had been torn in such a manner, that each half of a line formed a complete sense, and even a verse of a shorter measure; but what was still surprising, these short verses were found to contain the most injurious reflections on the king. They ran thus:

To flagrant crimes
His crown he owes,
To peaceful times
The worst of foes.

The envious man was now happy for the first time in his life. He had it in his power to ruin a person of virtue and merit. Filled with this fiend-

like joy, he found means to convey to the king the satire written by the hand of Zadig, who was immediately thrown into prison, together with the lady and Zadig's two friends.

His trial was soon finished without his being permitted to speak for himself. As he was going to receive his sentence, the envious man threw himself in his way, and told him with a loud voice, that his verses were good for nothing. Zadig did not value himself on being a good poet; but it filled him with inexpressible concern to find that he was condemned for high treason; and that the fair lady and his two friends were confined in prison for a crime of which they were not guilty. He was not allowed to speak, because his writing spoke for him. Such was the law of Babylon. Accordingly he was conducted to the place of execution through an immense crowd of spectators, who durst not venture to express their pity for him, but who carefully examined his countenance to see if he died with a good grace. His relations alone were inconsolable; for they could not succeed to his estate. Three-fourths of his wealth were confiscated into the king's treasury, and the other fourth was given to the envious man.

Just as he was preparing for death, the king's parrot flew from its cage, and alighted on a rose bush in Zadig's garden. A peach had been driven thither by the wind from a neighboring tree, and had fallen on a piece of the written leaf of the pocket-book, to which it stuck. The bird carried off the peach and the paper, and laid them on the king's knee. The king took up the paper with great eagerness, and read the words, which formed no sense, and seemed to be the endings of verses. He loved poetry; and there is always some mercy to be expected from a prince of that disposition. The adventure of the parrot caused him to reflect.

The queen, who remembered what had been written on the piece of Zadig's pocket-book, ordered it to be brought. They compared the two pieces together, and found them to tally exactly. They then read the verses as Zadig had written them.

Tyrants are prone to flagrant crimes;
To clemency his crown he owes;
To concord and to peaceful times
Love only is the worst of foes.

The king gave immediate orders that Zadig should be brought before him, and that his two friends and the lady should be set at liberty. Zadig fell prostrate on the ground before the king and queen, humbly begged their pardon for having made such bad verses, and spoke with so much propriety, wit, and good sense, that their majesties desired they might see him again. He did himself that honor, and insinuated himself still farther into their good graces. They gave him all the wealth of the envious man; but Zadig restored him back the whole of it; and this instance of generosity gave no other pleasure to the envious man than that

of having preserved his estate. The king's esteem for Zadig increased every day. He admitted him into all his parties of pleasure, and consulted him in all affairs of state. From that time the queen began to regard him with an eye of tenderness, that might one day prove dangerous to herself, to the king her august consort, to Zadig, and to the kingdom in general. Zadig now began to think that happiness was not so unattainable as he had formerly imagined.

V. The Generous

The time had now arrived for celebrating a grand festival, which returned every five years. It was a custom in Babylon solemnly to declare, at the end of every five years, which of the citizens had performed the most generous action. The grandees and the magi were the judges. The first satrap, who was charged with the government of the city, published the most noble actions that had passed under his administration. The competition was decided by votes; and the king pronounced the sentence. People came to this solemnity from the extremities of the earth. The conqueror received from the monarch's hands a golden cup adorned with precious stones, his majesty at the same time making him this compliment: "Receive this reward of thy generosity, and may the gods grant me many subjects like to thee."

This memorable day having come, the king appeared on his throne, surrounded by the grandees, the magi, and the deputies of all the nations that came to these games, where glory was acquired not by the swiftness of horses, nor by strength of body, but by virtue. The first satrap recited, with an audible voice, such actions as might entitle the authors of them to this invaluable prize. He did not mention the greatness of soul with which Zadig had restored the envious man his fortune, because it was not judged to be an action worthy of disputing the prize.

He first presented a judge, who having made a citizen lose a considerable cause by a mistake, for which, after all, he was not accountable, had given him the whole of his own estate, which was just equal to what the other had lost.

He next produced a young man, who being desperately in love with a lady whom he was going to marry, had yielded her up to his friend, whose passion for her had almost brought him to the brink of the grave, and at the same time had given him the lady's fortune.

He afterwards produced a soldier, who, in the wars of Hircania, had given a still more noble instance of generosity. A party of the enemy having seized his mistress, he fought in her defence with great intrepidity. At that very instant he was informed that another party, at the distance of a few paces, were carrying off his mother; he therefore left his mistress with tears in his eyes, and flew to the assistance of his mother. At last he

returned to the dear object of his love, and found her expiring. He was just going to plunge his sword in his own bosom; but his mother remonstrating against such a desperate deed, and telling him that he was the only support of her life, he had the courage to endure to live.

The judges were inclined to give the prize to the soldier. But the king took up the discourse, and said:

"The action of the soldier, and those of the other two, are doubtless very great, but they have nothing in them surprising. Yesterday, Zadig performed an action that filled me with wonder. I had a few days before disgraced Coreb, my minister and favorite. I complained of him in the most violent and bitter terms; all my courtiers assured me that I was too gentle, and seemed to vie with each other in speaking ill of Coreb. I asked Zadig what he thought of him, and he had the courage to commend him. I have read in our histories of many people who have atoned for an error by the surrender of their fortune; who have resigned a mistress; or preferred a mother to the object of their affection; but never before did I hear of a courtier who spoke favorably of a disgraced minister, that labored under the displeasure of his sovereign. I give to each of those whose generous actions have been now recited, twenty thousand pieces of gold; but the cup I give to Zadig."

"May it please your majesty," said Zadig, "thyself alone deservest the cup. Thou hast performed an action of all others the most uncommon and meritorious, since, notwithstanding thy being a powerful king, thou wast not offended at thy slave, when he presumed to oppose thy passion."

The king and Zadig were equally the object of admiration. The judge who had given his estate to his client; the lover who had resigned his mistress to his friend, and the soldier, who had preferred the safety of his mother to that of his mistress, received the king's presents, and saw their names enrolled in the catalogue of generous men. Zadig had the cup, and the king acquired the reputation of a good prince, which he did not long enjoy. The day was celebrated by feasts that lasted longer than the law enjoined; and the memory of it is still preserved in Asia. Zadig said: "Now I am happy at last." But he found himself fatally deceived.

VI. The Minister

The king had lost his first minister, and chose Zadig to supply his place. All the ladies in Babylon applauded the choice; for, since the foundation of the empire, there had never been such a young minister. But all the courtiers were filled with jealousy and vexation. The envious man, in particular, was troubled with a spitting of blood, and a prodigious inflammation in his nose. Zadig, having thanked the king and queen for their goodness, went likewise to thank the parrot.

"Beautiful bird," said he, "tis thou that hast saved my life, and made

me first minister. The queen's bitch and the king's horse did me a great deal of mischief; but thou hast done me much good. Upon such slender threads as these do the fates of mortals hang! but," added he, "this happiness perhaps will vanish very soon."

"Soon," replied the parrot.

Zadig was somewhat startled at this word. But as he was a good natural philosopher, and did not believe parrots to be prophets, he quickly recovered his spirits, and resolved to execute his duty to the best of his power.

He made every one feel the sacred authority of the laws, but no one felt the weight of his dignity. He never checked the deliberations of the divan; and every vizier might give his opinion without fear of incurring the minister's displeasure. When he gave judgment, it was not he that gave it; it was the law; the rigor of which, however, whenever it was too severe, he always took care to soften; and when laws were wanting, the equity of his decisions was such as might easily have made them pass for those of Zoroaster.

It is to him that the nations are indebted for this grand principle, to wit, that it is better to run the risk of sparing the guilty than to condemn the innocent. He imagined that laws were made as well to secure the people from the suffering of injuries as to restrain them from the commission of crimes. His chief talent consisted in discovering the truth, which all men seek to obscure. This great talent he put in practice from the very beginning of his administration.

A famous merchant of Babylon, who died in the Indies, divided his estate equally between his two sons, after having disposed of their sister in marriage, and left a present of thirty thousand pieces of gold to that son who should be found to have loved him best. The eldest raised a tomb to his memory; the youngest increased his sister's portion, by giving her a part of his inheritance. Every one said that the eldest son loved his father best, and the youngest his sister; and that the thirty thousand pieces belonged to the eldest.

Zadig sent for both of them, the one after the other. To the eldest he said:

"Thy father is not dead; but has survived his last illness, and is returning to Babylon."

"God be praised," replied the young man; "but his tomb cost me a considerable sum."

Zadig afterwards repeated the same story to the youngest son.

"God be praised," said he; "I will go and restore to my father all that I have; but I could wish that he would leave my sister what I have given her."

"Thou shalt restore nothing," replied Zadig, "and thou shalt have the thirty thousand pieces, for thou art the son who loves his father best."

A widow, having a young son, and being possessed of a handsome fortune, had given a promise of marriage to two magi, who were both desirous of marrying her.

"I will take for my husband," said she, "the man who can give the best education to my beloved son."

The two magi contended who should bring him up, and the cause was carried before Zadig. Zadig summoned the two magi to attend him.

"What will you teach your pupil?" said he to the first.

"I will teach him," said the doctor, "the eight parts of speech, logic, astrology, pneumatics, what is meant by substance and accident, abstract and concrete, the doctrine of the monades, and the pre-established harmony."

"For my part," said the second, "I will endeavor to give him a sense of justice, and to make him worthy the friendship of good men."

Zadig then cried:

"Whether thou art the child's favorite or not, thou shalt have his mother."

VII. The Disputes and the Audiences

In this manner he daily discovered the subtlety of his genius and the goodness of his heart. The people at once admired and loved him. He passed for the happiest man in the world. The whole empire resounded with his name. All the ladies ogled him. All the men praised him for his justice. The learned regarded him as an oracle; and even the priests confessed that he knew more than the old archmagi Yebor. They were now so far from prosecuting him on account of the griffins, that they believed nothing but what he thought credible.

There had continued at Babylon, for the space of fifteen hundred years, a violent contest that had divided the empire into two sects. The one pretended that they ought to enter the temple of Mithra with the left foot foremost; the other held this custom in detestation, and always entered with the right foot first. The people waited with great impatience for the day on which the solemn feast of the sacred fire was to be celebrated, to see which sect Zadig would favor. All the world had their eyes fixed on his two feet, and the whole city was in the utmost suspense and perturbation. Zadig jumped into the temple with his feet joined together; and afterward proved, in an eloquent discourse, that the Sovereign of heaven and earth, who accepteth not the persons of men, maketh no distinction between the right and the left foot. The envious man and his wife alleged that his discourse was not figurative enough, and that he did not make the rocks and mountains dance with sufficient agility.

"He is dry," said they, "and void of genius. He does not make the sea to fly, and stars to fall, nor the sun to melt like wax. He has not the true oriental style."

Zadig contented himself with having the style of reason. All the world favored him, not because he was in the right road, or followed the dictates of reason, or was a man of real merit, but because he was prime vizier.

He terminated with the same happy address the grand dispute between the black and the white magi. The former maintained that it was the height of impiety to pray to God with the face turned toward the east in winter; the latter asserted that God abhorred the prayers of those who turned toward the west in summer. Zadig decreed that every man should be allowed to turn as he pleased.

Thus he found out the happy secret of finishing all affairs, whether of a private or a public nature, in the morning. The rest of the day he employed in superintending and promoting the embellishments of Babylon. He exhibited tragedies that drew tears from the eyes of the spectators, and comedies that shook their sides with laughter, — a custom which had long been disused, and which his good taste now induced him to revive. He never affected to be more knowing in the polite arts than the artists themselves. He encouraged them by rewards and honors, and was never jealous of their talents. In the evening the king was highly entertained with his conversation, and the queen still more.

"Great minister!" said the king.

"Amiable minister!" said the queen; and both of them added, "It would have been a great loss to the state had such a man been hanged."

Meanwhile Zadig perceived that his thoughts were always distracted, as well when he gave audience as when he sat in judgment. He did not know to what to attribute this absence of mind, and that was his only sorrow.

He had a dream, in which he imagined that he laid himself down upon a heap of dry herbs, among which there were many prickly ones that gave him great uneasiness, and that he afterward reposed himself on a soft bed of roses, from which there sprung a serpent that wounded him to the heart with its sharp venomed fangs. "Alas," said he, "I have long lain on these dry and prickly herbs, I am now on the bed of roses; but what shall be the serpent?"

VIII. Jealousy

Zadig's calamities sprung even from his happiness, and especially from his merit. He every day conversed with the king and his august consort. The charms of Zadig's conversation were greatly heightened by that desire of pleasing which is to the mind what dress is to beauty. His youth and graceful appearance insensibly made an impression on Astarte, which she did not at first perceive. Her passion grew and flourished in the bosom of innocence. Without fear or scruple, she indulged the pleasing satisfaction of seeing and hearing a man who was so dear to her husband, and to

the empire in general. She was continually praising him to the king. She talked of him to her women, who were always sure to improve on her praises. And thus everything contributed to pierce her heart with a dart, of which she did not seem to be sensible. She made several presents to Zadig, which discovered a greater spirit of gallantry than she imagined. She intended to speak to him only as a queen satisfied with his services; and her expressions were sometimes those of a woman in love.

Astarte was much more beautiful than that Semira who had such a strong aversion to one-eyed men, or that other woman who had resolved to cut off her husband's nose. Her unreserved familiarity, her tender expressions, at which she began to blush; and her eyes, which, though she endeavored to divert them to other objects, were always fixed upon his, inspired Zadig with a passion that filled him with astonishment. He struggled hard to get the better of it. He called to his aid the precepts of philosophy, which had always stood him in stead; but from thence, though he could derive the light of knowledge, he could procure no remedy to cure the disorders of his love-sick heart. Duty, gratitude, and violated majesty, presented themselves to his mind, as so many avenging gods. He struggled; he conquered. But this victory, which he was obliged to purchase afresh every moment, cost him many sighs and tears. He no longer dared to speak to the queen with that sweet and charming familiarity which had been so agreeable to them both. His countenance was covered with a cloud. His conversation was constrained and incoherent. His eyes were fixed on the ground; and when, in spite of all his endeavors to the contrary, they encountered those of the queen, they found them bathed in tears, and darting arrows of flame. They seemed to say, We adore each other, and yet are afraid to love: we are consumed with a passion which we both condemn.

Zadig left the royal presence full of perplexity and despair, and having his heart oppressed with a burden which he was no longer able to bear. In the violence of his perturbation he involuntarily betrayed the secret to his friend Cador, in the same manner as a man, who, having long endured a cruel disease, discovers his pain by a cry extorted from him by a more severe attack, and by the cold sweat that covers his brow.

"I have already discovered," said Cador, "the sentiments which thou wouldst fain conceal from thyself. The symptoms by which the passions show themselves are certain and infallible. Judge, my dear Zadig, since I have read thy heart, whether the king will not discover something in it that may give him offence. He has no other fault but that of being the most jealous man in the world. Thou canst resist the violence of thy passion with greater fortitude than the queen, because thou art a philosopher, and because thou art Zadig. Astarte is a woman. She suffers her eyes to speak with so much the more imprudence, as she does not as yet think herself guilty. Conscious of her own innocence, she unhappily neglects

those external appearances which are so necessary. I shall tremble for her so long as she has nothing wherewithal to reproach herself. . . . A growing passion which we endeavor to suppress, discovers itself in spite of all our efforts to the contrary."

Meanwhile, the queen mentioned the name of Zadig so frequently, and with such a blushing and downcast look. She was sometimes so lively, and sometimes so perplexed, when she spoke to him in the king's presence, and was seized with such a deep thoughtfulness at his going away, that the king began to be troubled. He believed all that he saw, and imagined all that he did not see. He particularly remarked, that his wife's shoes were blue, and that Zadig's shoes were blue; that his wife's ribbons were yellow, and that Zadig's bonnet was yellow; and these were terrible symptoms to a prince of so much delicacy. In his jealous mind suspicion was turned into certainty.

All the slaves of kings and queens are so many spies over their hearts. They soon observed that Astarte was tender, and that Moabdar was jealous. The envious man persuaded his wife to send anonymously to the king her garter, which resembled those of the queen; and to complete the misfortune, this garter was blue. The monarch now thought of nothing but in what manner he might best execute his vengeance. He one night resolved to poison the queen, and in the morning to put Zadig to death by the bowstring. The orders were given to a merciless eunuch, who commonly executed his acts of vengeance.

There happened at that time to be in the king's chamber a little dwarf, who, though dumb, was not deaf. He was allowed on account of his insignificance, to go wherever he pleased; and, as a domestic animal, was a witness of what passed in the most profound secrecy.

This little mute was strongly attached to the queen and Zadig. With equal horror and surprise, he heard the cruel orders given; but how could he prevent the fatal sentence that in a few hours was to be carried into execution? He could not write, but he could paint; and excelled particularly in drawing a striking resemblance. He employed a part of the night in sketching out with his pencil what he meant to impart to the queen. The piece represented the king in one corner, boiling with rage, and giving orders to the eunuch; a blue bowstring, and a bowl on a table, with blue garters and yellow ribbons; the queen in the middle of the picture, expiring in the arms of her woman, and Zadig strangled at her feet. The horizon represented a rising sun, to express that this shocking execution was to be performed in the morning. As soon as he had finished the picture, he ran to one of Astarte's women, awoke her, and made her understand that she must immediately carry it to the queen.

At midnight a messenger knocks at Zadig's door, awakes him, and gives him a note from the queen. He doubts whether it is not a dream; and opens the letter with a trembling hand. But how great was his surprise,

and who can express the consternation and despair into which he was thrown upon reading these words? "Fly, this instant, or thou art a dead man! Fly, Zadig, I conjure thee by our mutual love and my yellow ribbons. I have not been guilty, but I find that I must die like a criminal."

Zadig was hardly able to speak. He sent for Cador, and, without uttering a word, gave him the note. Cador forced him to obey, and forthwith to take the road to Memphis.

"Shouldst thou dare," said he, "to go in search of the queen, thou wilt hasten her death. Shouldst thou speak to the king, thou wilt infallibly ruin her. I will take upon me the charge of her destiny; follow thy own. I will spread a report that thou hast taken the road to India. I will soon follow thee, and inform thee of all that shall have passed in Babylon."

At that instant, Cador caused two the the swiftest dromedaries to be brought to a private gate of the palace. Upon one of these he mounted Zadig, whom he was obliged to carry to the door, and who was ready to expire with grief. He was accompanied by a single domestic; and Cador, plunged in sorrow and astonishment, soon lost sight of his friend.

This illustrious fugitive arriving on the side of a hill, from whence he could take a view of Babylon, turned his eyes toward the queen's palace, and fainted away at the sight; nor did he recover his senses but to shed a torrent of tears, and to wish for death. At length, after his thoughts had been long engrossed in lamenting the unhappy fate of the loveliest woman and the greatest queen in the world, he for a moment turned his views on himself, and cried:

"What then is human life? O virtue, how hast thou served me? Two women have basely deceived me; and now a third, who is innocent, and more beautiful than both the others, is going to be put to death! Whatever good I have done hath been to me a continual source of calamity and affliction; and I have only been raised to the height of grandeur, to be tumbled down the most horrid precipice of misfortune."

Filled with these gloomy reflections, his eyes overspread with the veil of grief, his countenance covered with the paleness of death, and his soul plunged in an abyss of the blackest despair, he continued his journey toward Egypt.

IX. The Woman Beater

Zadig directed his course by the stars. The constellation of Orion, and the splendid Dogstars, guided his steps toward the pole of Canopæa. He admired those vast globes of light which appear to our eyes as so many little sparks, while the earth, which in reality is only an imperceptible point in nature, appears to our fond imaginations as something so grand and noble. He then represented to himself the human species, as it really is, as a parcel of insects devouring one another on a little atom of clay.

This true image seemed to annihilate his misfortunes, by making him sensible of the nothingness of his own being, and that of Babylon. His soul launched out into infinity, and detached from the senses, contemplated the immutable order of the universe. But when afterward, returning to himself, and entering into his own heart, he considered that Astarte had perhaps died for him, the universe vanished from his sight, and he beheld nothing in the whole compass of nature but Astarte expiring, and Zadig unhappy.

While he thus alternately gave up his mind to this flux and reflux of sublime philosophy and intolerable grief, he advanced toward the frontiers of Egypt; and his faithful domestic was already in the first village, in search of a lodging.

Meanwhile, as Zadig was walking toward the gardens that skirted the village, he saw, at a small distance from the highway, a woman bathed in tears and calling heaven and earth to her assistance, and a man in a furious passion pursuing her.

This madman had already overtaken the woman, who embraced his knees, notwithstanding which he loaded her with blows and reproaches. Zadig judged by the frantic behavior of the Egyptian, and by the repeated pardons which the lady asked him, that the one was jealous, and the other unfaithful. But when he surveyed the woman more narrowly, and found her to be a lady of exquisite beauty, and even to have a strong resemblance to the unhappy Astarte, he felt himself inspired with compassion for her, and horror toward the Egyptian.

"Assist me," cried she to Zadig, with the deepest sighs, "deliver me from the hands of the most barbarous man in the world. Save my life."

Moved by these pitiful cries, Zadig ran and threw himself between her and the barbarian. As he had some knowledge of the Egyptian language, he addressed him in that tongue:

"If," said he, "thou hast any humanity, I conjure thee to pay some regard to her beauty and weakness. How canst thou behave in this outrageous manner to one of the masterpieces of nature, who lies at thy feet, and hath no defence but her tears?"

"Ah, ah!" replied the madman, "thou art likewise in love with her. I must be revenged on thee, too."

So saying, he left the lady, whom he had hitherto held with his hand twisted in her hair, and taking his lance attempted to stab the stranger. Zadig, who was in cold blood, easily eluded the blow aimed by the frantic Egyptian. He seized the lance near the iron with which it was armed. The Egyptian strove to draw it back; Zadig to wrest it from the Egyptian; and in the struggle it was broken in two. The Egyptian draws his sword; Zadig does the same. They attack each other. The former gives a hundred blows at random; the latter wards them off with great dexterity. The lady, seated on a turf, readjusts her head-dress, and looks at the com-

batants. The Egyptian excelled in strength: Zadig in address. The one fought like a man whose arm was directed by his judgment; the other like a madman, whose blind rage made him deal his blows at random. Zadig closes with him, and disarms him; and while the Egyptian, now become more furious, endeavors to throw himself upon him, he seizes him, presses him close, and throws him down; and then holding his sword to his breast, offers him his life. The Egyptian, frantic with rage, draws his poniard, and wounds Zadig at the very instant that the conqueror was granting a pardon. Zadig, provoked at such brutal behavior, plunged his sword in the bosom of the Egyptian, who giving a horrible shriek and a violent struggle, instantly expired. Zadig then approached the lady, and said to her with a gentle tone:

"He hath forced me to kill him. I have avenged thy cause. Thou art now delivered from the most violent man I ever saw. What further, madam, wouldest thou have me do for thee?"

"Die, villain," replied she, "thou hast killed my lover. O that I were able to tear out thy heart!"

"Why truly, madam," said Zadig, "thou hadst a strange kind of man for a lover; he beat thee with all his might, and would have killed thee, because thou hadst entreated me to give thee assistance."

"I wish he were beating me still," replied the lady with tears and lamentation. "I well deserved it; for I had given him cause to be jealous. Would to heaven that he was now beating me, and that thou wast in his place."

Zadig, struck with surprise, and inflamed with a higher degree of resentment than he had ever felt before, said:

"Beautiful as thou art, madam, thou deservest that I should beat thee in my turn for thy perverse and impertinent behavior. But I shall not give myself the trouble."

So saying, he remounted his camel, and advanced toward the town. He had proceeded but a few steps, when he turned back at the noise of four Babylonian couriers, who came riding at full gallop. One of them, upon seeing the woman, cried:

"It is the very same. She resembles the description that was given us."

They gave themselves no concern about the dead Egyptian, but instantly seized the lady. She called out to Zadig:

"Help me once more, generous stranger. I ask pardon for having complained of thy conduct. Deliver me again, and I will be thine for ever."

Zadig was no longer in the humor of fighting for her.

"Apply to another," said he, "thou shalt not again ensnare me in thy wiles."

Besides, he was wounded; his blood was still flowing, and he himself had need of assistance: and the sight of four Babylonians, probably sent by King Moabdar, filled him with apprehension. He therefore hastened

toward the village, unable to comprehend why four Babylonian couriers should come and seize this Egyptian woman, but still more astonished at the lady's behavior.

X. Slavery

As he entered the Egyptian village, he saw himself surrounded by the people. Every one said:

"This is the man who carried off the beautiful Missouf, and assassinated Clitofis."

"Gentleman," said he, "God preserve me from carrying off your beautiful Missouf. She is too capricious for me. And with regard to Clitofis, I did not assassinate him. I only fought with him in my own defence. He endeavored to kill me, because I humbly interceded for the beautiful Missouf, whom he beat most unmercifully. I am a stranger, come to seek refuge in Egypt; and it is not likely, that in coming to implore your protection, I should begin by carrying off a woman, and assassinating a man."

The Egyptians were then just and humane. The people conducted Zadig to the town-house. They first of all ordered his wound to be dressed, and then examined him and his servant apart, in order to discover the truth. They found that Zadig was not an assassin; but as he was guilty of having killed a man, the law condemned him to be a slave. His two camels were sold for the benefit of the town: all the gold he had brought with him was distributed among the inhabitants; and his person, as well as that of the companion of his journey, was exposed for sale in the market-place. An Arabian merchant, named Setoc, made the purchase; but as the servant was fitter for labor than the master, he was sold at a higher price. There was no comparison between the two men. Thus Zadig became a slave subordinate to his own servant. They were linked together by a chain fastened to their feet, and in this condition they followed the Arabian merchant to his house.

By the way Zadig comforted his servant, and exhorted him to patience; but he could not help making, according to his usual custom, some reflections on human life. "I see," said he, "that the unhappiness of my fate hath an influence on thine. Hitherto everything has turned out to me in a most unaccountable manner. I have been condemned to pay a fine for having seen the marks of a bitch's feet. I thought that I should once have been empaled alive on account of a griffin. I have been sent to execution for having made some verses in praise of the king. I have been on the point of being strangled, because the queen had yellow ribbons; and now I am a slave with thee, because a brutal wretch beat his mistress. Come, let us keep a good heart; all this will perhaps have an end. The Arabian merchants must necessarily have slaves; and why not me as well as

another, since, as well as another, I am a man? This merchant will not be cruel. He must treat his slaves well if he expects any advantage from them."

But while he spoke thus, his heart was entirely engrossed by the fate of the queen of Babylon.

Two days after, the merchant Setoc set out for Arabia Deserta, with his slaves and his camels. His tribe dwelt near the desert of Oreb. The journey was long and painful. Setoc set a much greater value on the servant than the master, because the former was more expert in loading the camels, and all the little marks of distinction were shown to him. A camel having died within two days journey of Oreb, his burden was divided and laid on the backs of the servants; and Zadig had his share among the rest. Setoc laughed to see all his slaves walking with their bodies inclined. Zadig took the liberty to explain to him the cause, and inform him of the laws of the balance. The merchant was astonished, and began to regard him with other eyes. Zadig, finding he had raised his curiosity, increased it still further by acquainting him with many things that related to commerce; the specific gravity of metals and commodities under an equal bulk; the properties of several useful animals; and the means of rendering those useful that are not naturally so.

At last Setoc began to consider Zadig as a sage, and preferred him to his companion, whom he had formerly so much esteemed. He treated him well, and had no cause to repent of his kindness.

As soon as Setoc arrived among his own tribe he demanded the payment of five hundred ounces of silver, which he had lent to a Jew in presence of two witnesses; but as the witnesses were dead, and the debt could not be proved, the Hebrew appropriated the merchant's money to himself, and piously thanked God for putting it in his power to cheat an Arabian. Setoc imparted this troublesome affair to Zadig, who had now become his counsel.

"In what place," said Zadig, "didst thou lend the five hundred ounces to this infidel?"

"Upon a large stone," replied the merchant, "that lies near the mountain of Oreb."

"What is the character of thy debtor?" said Zadig.

"That of a knave," returned Setoc.

"But I ask thee, whether he is lively or phlegmatic; cautious or imprudent?"

"He is, of all bad payers," said Setoc, "the most lively fellow I ever knew."

"Well," resumed Zadig, "allow me to plead thy cause."

In effect, Zadig having summoned the Jew to the tribunal, addressed the judge in the following terms:

"Pillow of the throne of equity, I come to demand of this man, in the

name of my master, five hundred ounces of silver, which he refused to repay."

"Hast thou any witnesses?" said the judge.

"No, they are dead; but there remains a large stone upon which the money was counted; and if it please thy grandeur to order the stone to be sought for, I hope that it will bear witness. The Hebrew and I will tarry here till the stone arrives. I will send for it at my master's expense."

"With all my heart," replied the judge, and immediately applied himself to the discussion of other affairs.

When the court was going to break up, the judge said to Zadig:

"Well, friend, hath not thy stone yet arrived?"

The Hebrew replied with a smile:

"Thy grandeur may stay here till to-morrow, and after all not see the stone. It is more than six miles from hence; and it would require fifteen men to move it."

"Well," cried Zadig, "did I not say that the stone would bear witness? Since this man knows where it is, he thereby confesses that it was upon it that the money was counted."

The Hebrew was disconcerted, and was soon after obliged to confess the truth. The judge ordered him to be fastened to the stone, without meat or drink, till he should restore the five hundred ounces, which were soon after paid.

The slave Zadig and the stone were held in great repute in Arabia.

XI. The Funeral Pile

Setoc, charmed with the happy issue of this affair, made his slave his intimate friend. He had now conceived as great an esteem for him as ever the king of Babylon had done; and Zadig was glad that Setoc had no wife. He discovered in his master a good natural disposition, much probity of heart, and a great share of good sense; but he was sorry to see that, according to the ancient custom of Arabia, he adored the host of heaven; that is, the sun, moon, and stars. He sometimes spoke to him on this subject with great prudence and discretion. At last he told him that these bodies were like all other bodies in the universe, and no more deserving of our homage than a tree or a rock.

"But," said Setoc, "they are eternal beings; and it is from them we derive all we enjoy. They animate nature; they regulate the seasons; and besides, are removed at such an immense distance from us, that we cannot help revering them."

"Thou receivest more advantage," replied Zadig, "from the waters of the Red Sea, which carry thy merchandise to the Indies. Why may not it be as ancient as the stars? and if thou adorest what is placed at a distance from thee, thou shouldest adore the land of the Gangarides, which lies at the extremity of the earth."

"No," said Setoc, "the brightness of the stars commands my adoration."

At night Zadig lighted up a great number of candles in the tent where he was to sup with Setoc; and the moment his patron appeared, he fell on his knees before these lighted tapers, and said:

"Eternal and shining luminaries! be ye always propitious to me."

Having thus said, he sat down at the table, without taking the least notice of Setoc.

"What art thou doing?" said Setoc in amaze.

"I act like thee," replied Zadig, "I adore these candles, and neglect their master and mine."

Setoc comprehended the profound sense of this apologue. The wisdom of his slave sunk deep into his soul. He no longer offered incense to the creatures, but he adored the eternal Being who made them.

There prevailed at that time in Arabia a shocking custom, sprung originally from Scythia, and which, being established in the Indies by the Brahmins, threatened to over-run all the East. When a married man died, and his beloved wife aspired to the character of a saint, she burned herself publicly on the body of her husband. This was a solemn feast, and was called the Funeral Pile of Widowhood; and that tribe in which most women had been burned was the most respected. An Arabian of Setoc's tribe being dead, his widow, whose name was Almona, and who was very devout, published the day and hour when she intended to throw herself into the fire, amidst the sound of drums and trumpets.

Zadig remonstrated against this horrible custom. He showed Setoc how inconsistent it was with the happiness of mankind to suffer young widows to burn themselves — widows who were capable of giving children to the state, or at least of educating those they already had; and he convinced him that it was his duty to do all that lay in his power to abolish such a barbarous practice.

"The women," said Setoc, "have possessed the right of burning themselves for more than a thousand years; and who shall dare to abrogate a law which time hath rendered sacred? Is there anything more respectable than ancient abuses?"

"Reason is more ancient," replied Zadig: "meanwhile, speak thou to the chiefs of the tribes, and I will go to wait on the young widow."

Accordingly, he was introduced to her, and after having insinuated himself into her good graces by some compliments on her beauty, and told her what a pity it was to commit so many charms to the flames, he at last praised her for her constancy and courage.

"Thou must surely have loved thy husband," said he to her, "with the most passionate fondness."

"Who, I?" replied the lady, "I loved him not at all. He was a brutal, jealous, and insupportable wretch; but I am firmly resolved to throw myself on his funeral pile."

"It would appear then," said Zadig, "that there must be a very delicious pleasure in being burnt alive."

"Oh! it makes me shudder," replied the lady, "but that must be overlooked. I am a devotee; I should lose my reputation; and all the world would despise me, if I did not burn myself."

Zadig having made her acknowledge that she burned herself to gain the good opinion of others, and to gratify her own vanity, entertained her with a long discourse calculated to make her a little in love with life, and even went so far as to inspire her with some degree of good will for the person who spoke to her.

"And what wilt thou do at last," said he, "if the vanity of burning thyself should not continue?"

"Alas!" said the lady, "I believe I should desire thee to marry me."

Zadig's mind was too much engrossed with the idea of Astarte not to elude this declaration; but he instantly went to the chiefs of the tribes, told them what had passed, and advised them to make a law by which a widow should not be permitted to burn herself, till she had conversed privately with a young man for the space of an hour. Since that time not a single widow hath burned herself in Arabia. They were indebted to Zadig alone for destroying in one day a cruel custom that had lasted for so many ages; and thus he became the benefactor of Arabia.

XII. The Supper

Setoc, who could not separate himself from this man in whom dwelt wisdom, carried Zadig to the great fair of Balzora, whither the richest merchants of the earth resorted. Zadig was highly pleased to see so many men of different countries united in the same place. He considered the whole universe as one large family assembled at Balzora. The second day he sat at table with an Egyptian, an Indian, an inhabitant of Cathay, a Greek, a Celtic, and several other strangers, who, in their frequent voyages to the Arabian Gulf, had learned enough of the Arabic to make themselves understood.

The Egyptian seemed to be in a violent passion. "What an abominable country," said he, "is Balzora! They refuse me a thousand ounces of gold on the best security in the world."

"How!" said Setoc. "On what security have they refused thee this sum?"

"On the body of my aunt," replied the Egyptian. "She was the most notable woman in Egypt; she always accompanied me in my journeys; she died on the road. I have converted her into one of the finest mummies in the world; and in my own country I could obtain any amount by giving her as a pledge. It is very strange that they will not here lend me a thousand ounces of gold on such a solid security."

Angry as he was, he was going to help himself to a bit of excellent boiled fowl, when the Indian, taking him by the hand, cried out in a sorrowful tone, "Ah! what art thou going to do?"

"To eat a bit of this fowl," replied the man who owned the mummy.

"Take care that thou dost not," replied the Indian. "It is possible that the soul of the deceased may have passed into this fowl; and thou wouldst not, surely, expose thyself to the danger of eating thy aunt? To boil fowls is a manifest outrage on nature."

"What dost thou mean by thy nature and thy fowls?" replied the choleric Egyptian. "We adore a bull, and yet we eat heartily of beef."

"You adore a bull! is it possible?" said the Indian.

"Nothing is more possible," returned the other; "we have done so for these hundred and thirty-five thousand years; and nobody amongst us has ever found fault with it."

"A hundred and thirty-five thousand years!" said the Indian. "This account is a little exaggerated. It is but eighty thousand years since India was first peopled, and we are surely more ancient than you are. Brahma prohibited our eating of ox-flesh before you thought of putting it on your spits or altars."

"This Brahma of yours," said the Egyptian, "is a pleasant sort of an animal, truly, to compare with our Apis. What great things hath your Brahma done?"

"It was he," replied the Brahmin, "that taught mankind to read and write, and to whom the world is indebted for the game of chess."

"Thou art mistaken," said a Chaldean who sat near him. "It is to the fish Oannes that we owe these great advantages; and it is just that we should render homage to none but him. All the world will tell thee that he is a divine being, with a golden tail, and a beautiful human head; and that for three hours every day he left the water to preach on dry land. He had several children, who were kings, as every one knows. I have a picture of him at home, which I worship with becoming reverence. We may eat as much beef as we please; but it is surely a great sin to dress fish for the table. Besides, you are both of an origin too recent and ignoble to dispute with me. The Egyptians reckon only a hundred and thirty-five thousand years, and the Indians but eighty thousand, while we have almanacs of four thousand ages. Believe me; renounce your follies; and I will give to each of you a beautiful picture of Oannes."

The man of Cathay took up the discourse, and said:

"I have a great respect for the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Greeks, the Celtics, Brahma, the bull Apis, and the beautiful fish Oannes; but I could think that Li, or Tien, as he is commonly called, is superior to all the bulls on the earth, or all the fish in the sea. I shall say nothing of my native country; it is as large as Egypt, Chaldea, and the Indies put together. Neither shall I dispute about the antiquity of our nation; because

it is of little consequence whether we are ancient or not; it is enough if we are happy. But were it necessary to speak of almanacs, I could say that all Asia takes ours, and that we had very good ones before arithmetic was known in Chaldea."

"Ignorant men, as ye all are," said the Greek; "do you not know that Chaos is the father of all; and that form and matter have put the world into its present condition?"

The Greek spoke for a long time, but was at last interrupted by the Celtic, who, having drank pretty deeply while the rest were disputing, imagined he was now more knowing than all the others, and said, with an oath, that there were none but Teutat and the mistletoe of the oak that were worth the trouble of a dispute; that, for his own part, he had always some mistletoe in his pocket; and that the Scythians, his ancestors, were the only men of merit that had ever appeared in the world; that it was true they had sometimes eaten human flesh, but that, notwithstanding this circumstance, his nation deserved to be held in great esteem; and that, in fine, if any one spoke ill of Teutat, he would teach him better manners.

The quarrel had now become warm, and Setoc feared the table would be stained with blood.

Zadig, who had been silent during the whole dispute, arose at last. He first addressed himself to the Celtic, as the most furious of the disputants. He told him that he had reason on his side, and begged a few mistletoes. He then praised the Greek for his eloquence, and softened all their exasperated spirits. He said but little to the man of Cathay, because he had been the most reasonable of them all. At last he said:

"You were going, my friends, to quarrel about nothing; for you are all of one mind."

At this assertion they all cried out in dissent.

"Is it not true," said he to the Celtic, "that you adore not this mistletoe, but him that made both the mistletoe and the oak?"

"Most undoubtedly," replied the Celtic.

"And thou, Mr. Egyptian, dost not thou revere, in a certain bull, him who created the bulls?"

"Yes," said the Egyptian.

"The fish Oannes," continued he, "must yield to him who made the sea and the fishes. The Indian and the Cathaian," added he, "acknowledge a first principle. I did not fully comprehend the admirable things that were said by the Greek; but I am sure he will admit a superior being on whom form and matter depend."

The Greek, whom they all admired, said that Zadig had exactly taken his meaning.

"You are all then," replied Zadig, "of one opinion and have no cause to quarrel."

All the company embraced him.

Setoc, after having sold his commodities at a very high price, returned to his own tribe with his friend Zadig; who learned, upon his arrival, that he had been tried in his absence and was now going to be burned by a slow fire.

XIII. The Rendezvous

During his journey to Balzora the priests of the stars had resolved to punish Zadig. The precious stones and ornaments of the young widows whom they sent to the funeral pile belonged to them of right; and the least they could now do was to burn Zadig for the ill office he had done them. Accordingly they accused him of entertaining erroneous sentiments of the heavenly host. They deposed against him, and swore that they had heard him say that the stars did not set in the sea. This horrid blasphemy made the judges tremble; they were ready to tear their garments upon hearing these impious words; and they would certainly have torn them had Zadig had wherewithal to pay them for new ones. But, in the excess of their zeal and indignation, they contented themselves with condemning him to be burnt by a slow fire. Setoc, filled with despair at this unhappy event, employed all his interest to save his friend, but in vain. He was soon obliged to hold his peace. The young widow, Almona, who had now conceived a great fondness for life, for which she was obliged to Zadig, resolved to deliver him from the funeral pile, of the abuse of which he had fully convinced her. She resolved the scheme in her own mind, without imparting it to any person whatever. Zadig was to be executed the next day. If she could save him at all, she must do it that very night; and the method taken by this charitable and prudent lady was as follows:

She perfumed herself; she heightened her beauty by the richest and gayest apparel, and went to demand an audience of the chief priest of the stars. As soon as she was introduced to the venerable old man, she addressed him in these terms: "Eldest son of the great bear, brother of the bull, and cousin of the great dog, (such were the titles of this pontiff,) I come to acquaint thee with my scruples. I am much afraid that I have committed a heinous crime in not burning myself on the funeral pile of my dear husband; for, indeed, what had I worth preserving? Perishable flesh, thou seest, that is already entirely withered." So saying, she drew up her long sleeves of silk, and showed her naked arms, which were of an elegant shape and a dazzling whiteness. "Thou seest," said she, "that these are little worth." The priest found in his heart that they were worth a great deal. He swore that he had never in his life seen such beautiful arms. "Alas!" said the widow, "my arms, perhaps, are not so bad as the rest but thou wilt confess that my neck is not worthy of the least regard." She then discovered the most charming neck that nature had ever formed. Compared to it a rose-bud on an apple of ivory would have appeared like

madder on the box-tree, and the whiteness of new-washed lambs would have seemed of a dusky yellow. Her large black eyes, languishing with the gentle lustre of a tender fire; her cheeks animated with the finest pink, mixed with the whiteness of milk; her nose, which had no resemblance to the tower of Mount Lebanon; her lips, like two borders of coral, inclosing the finest pearls in the Arabian Sea; all conspired to make the old man fancy and believe that he was young again. Almona, seeing his admiration, now entreated him to pardon Zadig. "Alas!" said he, "my charming lady, should I grant thee his pardon, it would be of no service, as it must necessarily be signed by three others, my brethren." "Sign it, however," said Almona. "With all my heart," said the priest. "Be pleased to visit me," said Almona, "when the bright star of Sheat shall appear in the horizon."

Almona then went to the second pontiff. He assured her that the sun, the moon, and all the luminaries of heaven, were but glimmering meteors in comparison to her charms. She asked the same favor of him, and he also granted it readily. She then appointed the second pontiff to meet her at the rising of the star Algenib. From thence she went to the third and fourth priest, always taking their signatures, and making an appointment from star to star. She then sent a message to the judges, entreating them to come to her house on an affair of great importance. They obeyed her summons. She showed them the four names, and told them that the priests had granted the pardon of Zadig. Each of the pontiffs arrived at the hour appointed. Each was surprised at finding his brethren there, but still more at seeing the judges also present. Zadig was saved; and Setoc was so charmed with the ingenuity and address of Almona, that he made her his wife. Zadig departed after having thrown himself at the feet of his fair deliverer. Setoc and he took leave of each other with tears in their eyes, swearing an eternal friendship, and promising that the first of them that should acquire a large fortune should share it with the other.

Zadig directed his course along the frontiers of Assyria, still musing on the unhappy Astarte, and reflecting on the severity of fortune, which seemed determined to make him the sport of her cruelty and the object of her persecution.

"What!" said he to himself, "four hundred ounces of gold for having seen a bitch! condemned to lose my head for four bad verses in praise of the king! ready to be strangled because the queen had shoes of the color of my bonnet! reduced to slavery for having succored a woman who was beaten! and on the point of being burnt for having saved the lives of all the young widows of Arabia!"

XIV. The Robber

Arriving on the frontiers which divide Arabia Petræa from Syria, he passed by a pretty strong castle, from which a party of armed Arabians sallied forth. They instantly surrounded him and cried:

"All thou hast belongs to us, and thy person is the property of our master."

Zadig replied by drawing his sword; his servant, who was a man of courage, did the same. They killed the first Arabians that presumed to lay hands on them; and, though the number was redoubled, they were not dismayed, but resolved to perish in the conflict. Two men defended themselves against a multitude; but such a combat could not last long. The master of the castle, whose name was Arbogad, having observed from a window the prodigies of valor perfomed by Zadig, conceived a high esteem for this heroic stranger. He descended in haste, and went in person to call off his men and deliver the two travelers.

"All that passes over my lands," said he, "belongs to me, as well as what I find upon the lands of others; but thou seemest to be a man of such undaunted courage, that I will exempt thee from the common law."

He then conducted him to his castle, ordering his men to treat him well; and in the evening Arbogad supped with Zadig. The lord of the castle was one of those Arabians who are commonly called robbers; but he now and then performed some good actions amidst a multitude of bad ones. He robbed with a furious rapacity, and granted favors with great generosity. He was intrepid in action; affable in company; a debauchee at table, but gay in his debauchery; and particularly remarkable for his frank and open behavior. He was highly pleased with Zadig, whose lively conversation lengthened the repast. At last Arbogad said to him:

"I advise thee to enroll thy name in my catalogue. Thou canst not do better. This is not a bad trade, and thou mayest one day become what I am at present."

"May I take the liberty of asking thee," said Zadig, "how long thou hast followed this noble profession?"

"From my most tender youth," replied the lord, "I was servant to a petty, good-natured Arabian, but could not endure the hardships of my situation. I was vexed to find that fate had given me no share of the earth which equally belongs to all men. I imparted the cause of my uneasiness to an old Arabian, who said to me:

"'My son, do not despair; there was once a grain of sand that lamented that it was no more than a neglected atom in the deserts; at the end of a few years it became a diamond, and it is now the brightest ornament in the crown of the king of the Indies.'

"This discourse made a deep impression on my mind. I was the grain of sand, and I resolved to become the diamond. I began by stealing two horses. I soon got a party of companions. I put myself in a condition to rob small caravans; and thus, by degrees, I destroyed the difference which had formerly subsisted between me and other men. I had my share of the good things of this world; and was even recompensed with usury for the hardships I had suffered. I was greatly respected, and became the captain

of a band of robbers. I seized this castle by force. The satrap of Syria had a mind to dispossess me of it; but I was too rich to have any thing to fear. I gave the satrap a handsome present, by which means I preserved my castle, and increased my possessions. He even appointed me treasurer of the tributes which Arabia Petræa pays to the king of kings. I perform my office of receiver with great punctuality; but take the freedom to dispense with that of paymaster.

"The grand Desterham of Babylon sent hither a petty satrap in the name of king Moabdar, to have me strangled. This man arrived with his orders. I was apprised of all. I caused to be strangled in his presence the four persons he had brought with him to draw the noose; after which I asked him how much his commission of strangling me might be worth. He replied, that his fees would amount to above three hundred pieces of gold. I then convinced him that he might gain more by staying with me. I made him an inferior robber; and he is now one of my best and richest officers. If thou wilt take my advice, thy success may be equal to his. Never was there a better season for plunder, since king Moabdar is killed, and all Babylon thrown into confusion."

"Moabdar killed!" said Zadig, "and what has become of queen Astarte?"

"I know not," replied Arbogad. "All I know is, that Moabdar lost his senses and was killed; that Babylon is a scene of disorder and bloodshed; that all the empire is desolated; that there are some fine strokes to be made yet; and that, for my own part, I have struck some that are admirable."

"But the queen," said Zadig; "for heaven's sake, knowest thou nothing of the queen's fate?"

"Yes," replied he, "I have heard something of a prince of Hircania. If she was not killed in the tumult, she is probably one of his concubines. But I am much fonder of booty than news. I have taken several women in my excursions; but I keep none of them. I sell them at a high price when they are beautiful, without enquiring who they are. In commodities of this kind rank makes no difference, and a queen that is ugly will never find a merchant. Perhaps I may have sold queen Astarte; perhaps she is dead; but, be it as it will, it is of little consequence to me, and I should imagine of as little to thee."

So saying, he drank a large draught, which threw all his ideas into such confusion that Zadig could obtain no farther information.

Zadig remained for some time without speech, sense, or motion. Arbogad continued drinking; constantly repeated that he was the happiest man in the world; and exhorted Zadig to put himself in the same condition. At last the soporiferous fume of the wine lulled him into a gentle repose. Zadig passed the night in the most violent perturbation.

"What," said he, "did the king lose his senses? and is he killed? I can-

not help lamenting his fate. The empire is rent in pieces: and this robber is happy. O fortune! O destiny! A robber is happy, and the most beautiful of nature's works hath perhaps perished in a barbarous manner, or lives in a state worse than death. O Astarte! what has become of thee?"

At day break, he questioned all those he met in the castle; but they were all busy and he received no answer. During the night they had made a new capture, and they were now employed in dividing the spoil. All he could obtain in this hurry and confusion was an opportunity of departing, which he immediately embraced, plunged deeper than ever in the most gloomy and mournful reflections.

Zadig proceeded on his journey with a mind full of disquiet and perplexity, and wholly employed on the unhappy Astarte, on the king of Babylon, on his faithful friend Cador, on the happy robber Arbogad, on that capricious woman whom the Babylonians had seized on the frontiers of Egypt. In a word, on all the misfortunes and diappointments he had hitherto suffered.

XV. The Fisherman

At a few leagues distance from Arbogad's castle he came to the banks of a small river, still deploring his fate, and considering himself as the most wretched of mankind. He saw a fisherman lying on the bank of the river, scarcely holding in his weak and feeble hand a net which he seemed ready to drop, and lifting up his eyes to heaven.

"I am certainly," said the fisherman, "the most unhappy man in the world. I was universally allowed to be the most famous dealer in cream-cheese in Babylon, and yet I am ruined. I had the most handsome wife that any man in my situation could have; and by her I have been betrayed. I had still left a paltry house, and that I have seen pillaged and destroyed. At last I took refuge in this cottage, where I have no other resource than fishing, and yet I cannot catch a single fish. Oh, my net! no more will I throw thee into the water; I will throw myself in thy place."

So saying, he arose and advanced forward, in the attitude of a man ready to throw himself into the river, and thus to finish his life.

"What," said Zadig, "are there men as wretched as I?"

His eagerness to save the fisherman's life was as sudden as this reflection. He runs to him, stops him, and speaks to him with a tender and compassionate air. It is commonly supposed that we are less miserable when we have companions in our misery. This, according to Zoroaster, does not proceed from malice, but necessity. We feel ourselves insensibly drawn to an unhappy person as to one like ourselves. The joy of the happy would be an insult; but two men in distress are like two slender trees, mutually supporting each other, fortify themselves against the tempest.

"Why," said Zadig to the fisherman, "dost thou sink under thy misfortunes?"

"Because," replied he, "I see no means of relief. I was the most considerable man in the village of Derlback, near Babylon, and with the assistance of my wife I made the best cream-cheese in the empire. Queen Astarte, and the famous minister, Zadig, were extremely fond of them. I had sent them six hundred cheeses, and one day went to the city to receive my money; but, on my arrival at Babylon, was informed that the queen and Zadig had disappeared. I ran to the house of Lord Zadig, whom I had never seen; and found there the inferior officers of the grand Desterham, who being furnished with a royal license, were plundering it with great loyalty and order. From thence I flew to the queen's kitchen, some of the lords of which told me that the queen was dead; some said she was in prison; and others pretended that she had made her escape; but they all agreed in assuring me that I would not be paid for my cheese. I went with my wife to the house of Lord Orcan, who was one of my customers, and begged his protection in my present distress. He granted it to my wife, but refused it to me. She was whiter than the cream-cheeses that began my misfortune, and the lustre of the Tyrian purple was not more bright than the carnation which animated this whiteness. For this reason Orcan detained her, and drove me from his house. In my despair I wrote a letter to my dear wife. She said to the bearer, 'Ha, ha! I know the writer of this a little. I have heard his name mentioned. They say he makes excellent cream-cheeses. Desire him to send me some and he shall be paid.'

"In my distress I resolved to apply to justice. I had still six ounces of gold remaining. I was obliged to give two to the lawyer whom I consulted, two to the procurator who undertook my cause, and two to the secretary of the first judge. When all this was done, my business was not begun; and I had already expended more money than my cheese and my wife were worth. I returned to my own village, with an intention to sell my house, in order to enable me to recover my wife.

"My house was well worth sixty ounces of gold; but as my neighbors saw I was poor and obliged to sell it, the first to whom I applied offered me thirty ounces, the second twenty, and the third ten. Bad as these offers were, I was so blind that I was going to strike a bargain, when a prince of Hircania came to Babylon, and ravaged all in his way. My house was first sacked and then burned.

"Having thus lost my money, my wife, and my house, I retired into this country, where thou now seest me. I have endeavored to gain a subsistance by fishing; but the fish make a mock of me as well as the men. I catch none; I die with hunger; and had it not been for thee, august comforter, I should have perished in the river."

The fisherman was not allowed to give this long account without interruption; at every moment, Zadig, moved and transported, said:

"What! knowest thou nothing of the queen's fate?"

"No my lord," replied the fisherman; "but I know that neither the queen nor Zadig have paid me for my cream-cheeses; that I have lost my wife, and am now reduced to despair."

"I flatter myself," said Zadig, "that thou wilt not lose all thy money. I have heard of this Zadig; he is an honest man; and if he return to Babylon, as he expects, he will give thee more than he owes thee. But with regard to thy wife, who is not so honest, I advise thee not to seek to recover her. Believe me, go to Babylon; I shall be there before thee, because I am on horseback, and thou art on foot. Apply to the illustrious Cador. Tell him thou hast met his friend. Wait for me at his house. Go, perhaps thou wilt not always be unhappy.

"O powerful Oromazes!" continued he, "thou employest me to comfort this man. Whom wilt thou employ to give me consolation?"

So saying, he gave the fisherman half the money he had brought from Arabia. The fisherman, struck with surprise and ravished with joy, kissed the feet of the friend of Cador, and said:

"Thou art surely an angel sent from heaven to save me!" Meanwhile Zadig continued to make fresh inquiries and to shed tears. "What! my lord," cried the fisherman, "and art thou then so unhappy, thou who bestowest favors?"

"A hundred times more unhappy than thee," replied Zadig.

"But how is it possible," said the good man, "that the giver can be more wretched than the receiver?"

"Because," replied Zadig, "thy greatest misery arose from poverty, and mine is seated in the heart."

"Did Orcan take thy wife from thee?" said the fisherman.

This word recalled to Zadig's mind the whole of his adventures. He repeated the catalogue of his misfortunes, beginning with the queen's bitch and ending with his arrival at the castle of the robber Arbogad.

"Ah!" said he to the fisherman, "Orcan deserves to be punished: but it is commonly such men as those that are the favorites of fortune. However, go thou to the house of Lord Cador, and there await my arrival."

They then parted: the fisherman walked, thanking heaven for the happiness of his condition; and Zadig rode, accusing fortune for the hardness of his lot.

XVI. The Basilisk

Arriving in a beautiful meadow, he there saw several women, who were searching for something with great application. He took the liberty to approach one of them, and to ask if he might have the honor to assist them in their search.

"Take care that thou dost not," replied the Syrian. "What we are searching for can be touched only by women."

"Strange," said Zadig. "May I presume to ask thee what it is that women only are permitted to touch?"

"It is a basilisk," said she.

"A basilisk, madam! and for what purpose, pray, dost thou seek for a basilisk?"

"It is for our lord and master, Ogul, whose castle thou seest on the bank of that river, at the end of that meadow. We are his most humble slaves. The Lord Ogul is sick. His physician hath ordered him to eat a basilisk, stewed in rose-water; and as it is a very rare animal, and can only be taken by women, the lord Ogul hath promised to choose for his well-beloved wife the woman that shall bring him a basilisk. Let me go on in my search; for thou seest what I shall lose if I am forestalled by my companions."

Zadig left her and the other Assyrians to search for their basilisk, and continued his journey through the meadow; when coming to the brink of a small rivulet, he found a lady lying on the grass, and who was not searching for any thing. Her person seemed majestic; but her face was covered with a veil. She was inclined toward the rivulet, and profound sighs proceeded from her bosom. In her hand she held a small rod with which she was tracing characters on the fine sand that lay between the turf and the brook.

Zadig had the curiosity to examine what this woman was writing. He drew near. He saw the letter Z, then an A; he was astonished: then appeared a D; he started. But never was surprise equal to his, when he saw the two last letters of his name. He stood for some time immovable. At last breaking silence with a faltering voice:

"Oh! generous lady! pardon a stranger, an unfortunate man, for presuming to ask thee by what surprising adventure I here find the name of Zadig traced out by thy divine hand?"

At this voice and these words, the lady lifted up the veil with a trembling hand, looked at Zadig, sent forth a cry of tenderness, surprise, and joy, and sinking under the various emotions which at once assaulted her soul fell speechless into his arms. It was Astarte herself; it was the queen of Babylon; it was she whom Zadig adored, and whom he had reproached himself for adoring; it was she whose misfortunes he had so deeply lamented, and for whose fate he had been so anxiously concerned. He was for a moment deprived of the use of his senses, when he had fixed his eyes on those of Astarte, which now began to open again with a languor mixed with confusion and tenderness:

"O ye immortal powers!" cried he, "who preside over the fates of weak mortals; do ye indeed restore Astarte to me? At what a time, in what a place, and in what a condition do I again behold her?"

He fell on his knees before Astarte, and laid his face in the dust at her feet. The queen of Babylon raised him up, and made him sit by her side

on the brink of the rivulet. She frequently wiped her eyes, from which the tears continued to flow afresh. She twenty times resumed her discourse, which her sighs as often interrupted. She asked by what strange accident they were brought together; and suddenly prevented his answer by other questions. She waived the account of her own misfortunes, and desired to be informed of those of Zadig. At last, both of them having a little composed the tumult of their souls, Zadig acquainted her in a few words by what adventure he was brought into that meadow.

"But, O unhappy and respectable queen! by what means do I find thee in this lonely place, clothed in the habit of a slave, and accompanied by other female slaves, who are searching for a basilisk, which, by order of the physician, is to be stewed in rose-water?"

"While they are searching for their basilisk," said the fair Astarte, "I will inform thee of all I have suffered, for which heaven has sufficiently recompensed me, by restoring thee to my sight. Thou knowest that the king, my husband, was vexed to see thee, the most amiable of mankind; and that for this reason he one night resolved to strangle thee and poison me. Thou knowest how heaven permitted my little mute to inform me of the orders of his sublime majesty. Hardly had the faithful Cador obliged thee to depart, in obedience to my command, when he ventured to enter my apartment at midnight by a secret passage. He carried me off, and conducted me to the temple of Oromazes, where the magi, his brother, shut me up in that huge statue, whose base reaches to the foundation of the temple, and whose top rises to the summit of the dome. I was there buried in a manner; but was served by the magi, and supplied with all the necessaries of life. At break of day his majesty's apothecary entered my chamber with a potion composed of a mixture of henbane, opium, hemlock, black hellebore, and aconite; and another officer went to thine with a bow-string of blue silk. Neither of us were to be found. Cador, the better to deceive the king, pretended to come and accuse us both. He said that thou hadst taken the road to the Indies, and I that to Memphis; on which the king's guards were immediately dispatched in pursuit of us both.

"The couriers who pursued me did not know me. I had hardly ever shown my face to any but thee, and to thee only in the presence and by the order of my husband. They conducted themselves in the pursuit by the description that had been given of my person. On the frontiers of Egypt they met with a woman of the same stature with me, and possessed perhaps of greater charms. She was weeping and wandering. They made no doubt but that this woman was the queen of Babylon, and accordingly brought her to Moabdar. Their mistake at first threw the king into a violent passion; but having viewed this woman more attentively, he found her extremely handsome, and was comforted. She was called Missouf. I have since been informed that this name in the

Egyptian language signifies the capricious fair one. She was so in reality; but she had as much cunning as caprice. She pleased Moabdar, and gained such an ascendency over him as to make him choose her for his wife. Her character then began to appear in its true colors. She gave herself up, without scruple, to all the freaks of a wanton imagination. She would have obliged the chief of the magi, who was old and gouty, to dance before her; and on his refusal, she persecuted him with the most unrelenting cruelty. She ordered her master of the horse to make her a pie of sweetmeats. In vain did he represent that he was not a pastry-cook. He was obliged to make it, and lost his place because it was baked a little too hard. The post of master of the horse she gave to her dwarf, and that of chancellor to her page. In this manner did she govern Babylon. Every body regretted the loss of me. The king, who till the moment of his resolving to poison me and strangle thee had been a tolerably good kind of man, seemed now to have drowned all his virtues in his immoderate fondness for this capricious fair one. He came to the temple on the great day of the feast held in honor of the sacred fire. I saw him implore the gods in behalf of Missouf, at the feet of the statue in which I was inclosed. I raised my voice; I cried out:

"'The gods reject the prayers of a king who is now become a tyrant, and who attempted to murder a reasonable wife, in order to marry a woman remarkable for nothing but her folly and extravagance.'

"At these words Moabdar was confounded and his head became disordered. The oracle I had pronounced, and the tyranny of Missouf, conspired to deprive him of his judgment, and in a few days his reason entirely forsook him.

"His madness, which seemed to be the judgment of heaven, was the signal for a revolt. The people rose, and ran to arms; and Babylon, which had been so long immersed in idleness and effeminacy, became the theatre of a bloody civil war. I was taken from the heart of my statue and placed at the head of a party. Cador flew to Memphis to bring thee back to Babylon. The prince of Hircania, informed of these fatal events, returned with his army and made a third party in Chaldea. He attacked the king, who fled before him with his capricious Egyptian. Moabdar died pierced with wounds. Missouf fell into the hands of the conqueror. I myself had the misfortune to be taken by a party of Hircanians, who conducted me to their prince's tent, at the very moment that Missouf was brought before him. Thou wilt doubtless be pleased to hear that the prince thought me more beautiful than the Egyptian; but thou wilt be sorry to be informed that he designed me for his seraglio. He told me, with a blunt and resolute air, that as soon as he had finished a military expedition, which he was just going to undertake, he would come to me. Judge how great must have been my grief. My ties with Moabdar were already dissolved; I might have been the wife of Zadig; and I was fallen into the hands of a

barbarian. I answered him with all the pride which my high rank and noble sentiment could inspire. I had always heard it affirmed that heaven stamped on persons of my condition a mark of grandeur, which, with a single word or glance, could reduce to the lowliness of the most profound respect those rash and forward persons who presume to deviate from the rules of politeness. I spoke like a queen, but was treated like a maid-servant. The Hircanian, without even deigning to speak to me, told his black eunuch that I was impertinent, but that he thought me handsome. He ordered him to take care of me and to put me under the regimen of favorites, that, so my complexion being improved, I might be the more worthy of his favors when he should be at leisure to honor me with them. I told him, that, rather than submit to his desires, I would put an end to my life. He replied with a smile, that women, he believed, were not so blood-thirsty, and that he was accustomed to such violent expressions; and then left me with the air of a man who had just put another parrot into his aviary. What a state for the first queen in the universe, and, what is more, for a heart devoted to Zadig!"

At these words Zadig threw himself at her feet, and bathed them with his tears. Astarte raised him with great tenderness, and thus continued her story:

"I now saw myself in the power of a barbarian, and rival to the foolish woman with whom I was confined. She gave me an account of her adventures in Egypt. From the description she gave of your person, from the time, from the dromedary on which you was mounted, and from every other circumstance, I inferred that Zadig was the man who had fought for her. I doubted not but that you was at Memphis, and therefore resolved to repair thither. 'Beautiful Missouf,' said I, 'thou art more handsome than I, and will please the prince of Hircania much better. Assist me in contriving the means of my escape. Thou wilt then reign alone. Thou wilt at once make me happy and rid thyself of a rival.'

"Missouf concerted with me the means of my flight; and I departed secretly with a female slave. As I approached the frontiers of Arabia, a famous robber, named Arbogad, seized me and sold me to some merchants who brought me to this castle where Lord Ogul resides. He bought me without knowing who I was. He is a voluptuary, ambitious of nothing but good living, and thinks that God sent him into the world for no other purpose than to sit at table. He is so extremely corpulent, that he is always in danger of suffocation. His physician, who has but little credit with him when he has a good digestion, governs him with a despotic sway when he has eaten too much. He has persuaded him that a basilisk stewed in rose-water will effect a complete cure. The Lord Ogul hath promised his hand to the female slave that brings him a basilisk. Thou seest that I leave them to vie with each other in meriting this honor; and never was I less desirous of finding the basilisk than since heaven hath restored thee to my sight."

This account was succeeded by a long conversation between Astarte and Zadig, consisting of every thing that their long suppressed sentiments, their great sufferings, and their mutual love, could inspire into hearts the most noble and tender; and the genii who preside over love carried their words to the sphere of Venus.

The women returned to Ogul without having found the basilisk. Zadig was introduced to this mighty lord, and spoke to him in the following terms:

"May immortal health descend from heaven to bless all thy days! I am a physician. At the first report of thy indisposition I flew to thy castle, and have now brought thee a basilisk stewed in rose-water. Not that I pretend to marry thee. All I ask is the liberty of a Babylonian slave, who hath been in thy possession for a few days; and, if I should not be so happy as to cure thee, magnificent Lord Ogul, I consent to remain a slave in her place."

The proposal was accepted. Astarte set out for Babylon with Zadig's servant, promising, immediately upon her arrival, to send a courier to inform him of all that had happened. Their parting was as tender as their meeting. The moment of meeting, and that of parting are the two greatest epochs of life, as sayeth the great book of Zend. Zadig loved the queen with as much ardor as he professed; and the queen loved Zadig more than she thought proper to acknowledge.

Meanwhile Zadig spoke thus to Ogul:

"My lord, my basilisk is not to be eaten; all its virtues must enter through thy pores. I have inclosed it in a little ball, blown up and covered with a fine skin. Thou must strike this ball with all thy might, and I must strike it back for a considerable time; and by observing this regimen for a few days, thou wilt see the effects of my art."

The first day Ogul was out of breath, and thought he should have died with fatigue. The second, he was less fatigued, and slept better. In eight days he recovered all the strength, all the health, all the agility and cheerfulness of his most agreeable years.

"Thou hast played at ball, and hast been temperate," said Zadig. "Know that there is no such thing in nature as a basilisk; that temperance and exercise are the two great preservatives of health; and that the art of reconciling intemperance and health is as chimerical as the philosopher's stone, judicial astrology, or the theology of the magi."

Ogul's first physician observing how dangerous this man might prove to the medical art, formed a design, in conjunction with the apothecary, to send Zadig to search for a basilisk in the other world. Thus, after having suffered such a long train of calamities on account of his good actions, he was now upon the point of losing his life for curing a gluttonous lord. He was invited to an excellent dinner, and was to have been poisoned in the second course; but, during the first, he happily received a courier from the fair Astarte.

"When one is beloved by a beautiful woman," says the great Zoroaster, "he hath always the good fortune to extricate himself out of every kind of difficulty and danger."

XVII. The Combats

The queen was received at Babylon with all those transports of joy which are ever felt on the return of a beautiful princess who hath been involved in calamities. Babylon was now in greater tranquillity. The prince of Hircania had been killed in battle. The victorious Babylonians declared that the queen should marry the man whom they should choose for their sovereign. They were resolved that the first place in the world, that of being husband to Astarte and king of Babylon, should not depend on cabals and intrigues. They swore to acknowledge for king the man who, upon trial, should be found to be possessed of the greatest valor and the greatest wisdom. Accordingly, at the distance of a few leagues from the city, a spacious place was marked out for the list, surrounded with magnificent amphitheatres. Thither the combatants were to repair in complete armor. Each of them had a separate apartment behind the amphitheatres, where they were neither to be seen nor known by any one. Each was to encounter four knights; and those that were so happy as to conquer four, were then to engage with one another: so that he who remained the last master of the field, would be proclaimed conqueror at the games. Four days after he was to return to the same place, and to explain the enigmas proposed by the magi. If he did not explain the enigmas, he was not king; and the running at the lances was to begin afresh, till a man should be found who was conqueror in both these combats; for they were absolutely determined to have a king possessed of the greatest wisdom and the most invincible courage. The queen was all the while to be strictly guarded. She was only allowed to be present at the games, and even there she was to be covered with a veil; but was not allowed to speak to any of the competitors, that so they might neither receive favor, nor suffer injustice.

These particulars Astarte communicated to her lover, hoping that, in order to obtain her, he would show himself possessed of greater courage and wisdom than any other person.

Zadig set out on his journey, beseeching Venus to fortify his courage and enlighten his understanding. He arrived on the banks of the Euphrates on the eve of this great day. He caused his device to be inscribed among those of the combatants, concealing his face and his name, as the law ordained; and then went to repose himself in the apartment that fell to him by lot. His friend, Cador, who after the fruitless search he had made for him in Egypt, had now returned to Babylon, sent to his tent a complete suit of armor, which was a present from the queen; as also from himself, one of the finest horses in Persia. Zadig presently perceived that these pres-

ents were sent by Astarte; and from thence his courage derived fresh strength, and his love the most animating hopes.

Next day, the queen being seated under a canopy of jewels, and the amphitheatres filled with all the gentlemen and ladies of rank in Babylon, the combatants appeared in the circus. Each of them came and laid his device at the feet of the grand magi. They drew their devices by lot; and that of Zadig was the last. The first who advanced was a certain lord, named Itobad, very rich and very vain, but possessed of little courage, of less address, and scarcely of any judgment at all. His servants had persuaded him that such a man as he ought to be king. He had said in reply, "Such a man as I ought to reign"; and thus they had armed him cap-a-pie. He wore an armor of gold enameled with green, a plume of green feathers, and a lance adorned with green ribbons. It was instantly perceived by the manner in which Itobad managed his horse, that it was not for such a man as him that heaven reserved the sceptre of Babylon. The first knight that ran against him threw him out of his saddle: the second laid him flat on his horse's buttocks, and his legs in the air, and his arms extended. Itobad recovered himself, but with so bad a grace, that the whole amphitheatre burst out a laughing. The third knight disdained to make use of his lance; but, making a pass at him, took him by the right leg, and wheeling him half round, laid him prostrate on the sand. The squires of the games ran to him laughing, and replaced him in his saddle. The fourth combatant took him by the left leg, and tumbled him down on the other side. He was conducted back with scornful shouts to his tent, where, according to the law, he was to pass the night; and as he limped along with great difficulty, he said: "What an adventure for such a man as I!"

The other knights acquitted themselves with greater ability and success. Some of them conquered two combatants; a few of them vanquished three; but none but prince Otamus conquered four. At last Zadig fought in his turn. He successively threw four knights off their saddles with all the grace imaginable. It then remained to be seen who should be conqueror, Otamus or Zadig. The arms of the first were gold and blue, with a plume of the same color; those of the last were white. The wishes of all the spectators were divided between the knight in blue and the knight in white. The queen, whose heart was in a violent palpitation, offered prayers to heaven for the success of the white color.

The two champions made their passes and vaults with so much agility, they mutually gave and received such dexterous blows with their lances, and sat so firmly in their saddles, that every body but the queen wished there might be two kings in Babylon. At length, their horses being tired and their lances broken, Zadig had recourse to this stratagem: He passed behind the blue prince; springs upon the buttocks of his horse; seizes him by the middle; throws him on the earth; places himself in the saddle, and

wheels around Otamus as he lay extended on the ground. All the amphitheatre cried out, "Victory to the white knight!" Otamus rises in a violent passion, and draws his sword; Zadig leaps from his horse with his sabre in his hand. Both of them are now on the ground, engaged in a new combat, where strength and agility triumph by turns. The plumes of their helmets, the studs of their bracelets, and the rings of their armor are driven to a great distance by the violence of a thousand furious blows. They strike with the point and the edge; to the right, to the left; on the head, on the breast; they retreat; they advance; they measure swords; they close; they seize each other; they bend like serpents; they attack like lions; and the fire every moment flashes from their blows. At last Zadig, having recovered his spirits, stops; makes a feint; leaps upon Otamus; throws him on the ground and disarms him; and Otamus cries out:

"It is thou alone, O white knight, that oughtest to reign over Babylon!"

The queen was now at the height of her joy. The knight in blue armor, and the knight in white, were conducted each to his own apartment, as well as all the others, according to the intention of the law. Mutes came to wait upon them, and to serve them at table. It may be easily supposed that the queen's little mute waited upon Zadig. They were then left to themselves to enjoy the sweets of repose till next morning, at which time the conqueror was to bring his device to the grand magi, to compare it with that which he had left, and make himself known.

Zadig, though deeply in love, was so much fatigued that he could not help sleeping. Itobad, who lay near him, never closed his eyes. He arose in the night, entered his apartment, took the white arms and the device of Zadig, and put his green armor in their place. At break of day, he went boldly to the grand magi, to declare that so great a man as he was conqueror. This was little expected; however, he was proclaimed while Zadig was still asleep. Astarte, surprised and filled with despair, returned to Babylon. The amphitheatre was almost empty when Zadig awoke; he sought for his arms but could find none but the green armor. With this he was obliged to cover himself, having nothing else near him. Astonished and enraged, he put it on in a furious passion and advanced in this equipage.

The people that still remained in the amphitheatre and the circus received him with hoots and hisses. They surrounded him, and insulted him to his face. Never did man suffer such cruel mortifications. He lost his patience; with his sabre he dispersed such of the populace as dared to affront him; but he knew not what course to take. He could not see the queen; he could not claim the white armor she had sent him without exposing her; and thus, while she was plunged in grief, he was filled with fury and distraction. He walked on the banks of the Euphrates, fully persuaded that his star had destined him to inevitable misery; and revolving in his mind all his misfortunes, from the adventure of the woman who hated one-eyed men, to that of his armor:

"This," said he, "is the consequence of my having slept too long. Had I slept less, I should now have been king of Babylon, and in possession of Astarte. Knowledge, virtue, and courage, have hitherto served only to make me miserable."

He then let fall some secret murmurings against providence, and was tempted to believe that the world was governed by a cruel destiny, which oppressed the good, and prospered knights in green armor.

XVIII. The Hermit

One of Zadig's greatest mortifications was his being obliged to wear that green armor which had exposed him to such contumelious treatment. A merchant happening to pass by, he sold it to him for a trifle, and bought a gown and a long bonnet. In this garb he proceeded along the banks of the Euphrates, filled with despair, and secretly accusing providence, which thus continued to persecute him with unremitting severity.

While he was thus sauntering along, he met a hermit whose white and venerable beard hung down to his girdle. He held a book in his hand, which he read with great attention. Zadig stopped, and made him a profound obeisance. The hermit returned the compliment with such a noble and engaging air, that Zadig had the curiosity to enter into conversation with him. He asked him what book it was that he had been reading.

"It is the book of destinies," said the hermit. "Wouldst thou choose to look into it?"

He put the book into the hands of Zadig, who, thoroughly versed as he was in several languages, could not decipher a single character of it. This only redoubled his curiosity.

"Thou seemest," said the good father, "to be in great distress."

"Alas!" replied Zadig, "I have but too much reason."

"If thou wilt permit me to accompany thee," resumed the old man, "perhaps I may be of some service to thee. I have often poured the balm of consolation into the bleeding heart of the unhappy."

Zadig felt himself inspired with respect for the dignity, the beard, and the book of the hermit. He found, in the course of the conversation, that he was possessed of superior degrees of knowledge. The hermit talked of fate, of justice, of morals, of the chief good, of human weakness, and of virtue and vice, with such a spirited and moving eloquence, that Zadig felt himself drawn toward him by an irresistible charm. He earnestly entreated the favor of his company till their return to Babylon.

"I ask the same favor of thee," said the old man. "Swear to me by Oromazes that, whatever I do, thou wilt not leave me for some days."

Zadig swore, and they set out together. In the evening the two travelers arrived at a superb castle. The hermit entreated a hospitable reception for himself and the young man who accompanied him. The porter, whom one

might have mistaken for a great lord, introduced them with a kind of disdainful civility. He presented them to a principal domestic, who showed them his master's magnificent apartments. They were admitted to the lower end of the table, without being honored with the least mark of regard by the lord of the castle; but they were served, like the rest, with delicacy and profusion. They were then presented, in a golden basin adorned with emeralds and rubies, with water to wash their hands. At last they were conducted to bed in a beautiful apartment; and in the morning a domestic brought each of them a piece of gold, after which they took their leave and departed.

"The master of the house," said Zadig, as they were proceeding on the journey, "appears to be a generous man, though somewhat too proud. He nobly performs the duties of hospitality."

At that instant he observed that a kind of large pocket, which the hermit had, was filled and distended; and upon looking more narrowly, he found that it contained the golden basin adorned with precious stones, which the hermit had stolen. He durst not then take any notice of it; but he was filled with a strange surprise.

About noon the hermit came to the door of a paltry house, inhabited by a rich miser, and begged the favor of an hospitable reception for a few hours. An old servant, in a tattered garb, received them with a blunt and rude air, and led them into the stable, where he gave them some rotten olives, sour wine, and mouldy bread. The hermit ate and drank with as much seeming satisfaction as he had done the evening before, and then addressing himself to the old servant who watched them both to prevent them stealing anything, and had rudely pressed them to depart, he gave him the two pieces of gold he had received in the morning, and thanked him for his great civility.

"Pray," added he, "allow me to speak to thy master."

The servant, filled with astonishment, introduced the two travelers.

"Magnificent lord!" said the hermit, "I cannot but return thee my most humble thanks for the noble manner in which thou hast entertained us. Be pleased to accept of this golden basin as a small mark of my gratitude."

The miser started, and was ready to fall backwards; but the hermit, without giving him time to recover from his surprise, instantly departed with his young fellow traveler.

"Father," said Zadig, "what is the meaning of all this? Thou seemest to me to be entirely different from other men. Thou stealest a golden basin adorned with precious stones, from a lord who received thee magnificently, and givest it to a miser who treats thee with indignity."

"Son," replied the old man, "this magnificent lord, who receives strangers only from vanity and ostentation, will hereby be rendered more wise; and the miser will learn to practice the duties of hospitality. Be surprised at nothing, but follow me."

Zadig knew not as yet whether he was in company with the most foolish or the most prudent of mankind; but the hermit spoke with such an ascendency that Zadig, who was moreover bound by his oath, could not refuse to follow him.

In the evening they arrived at a house built with equal elegance and simplicity, where nothing savored either of prodigality or avarice. The master of it was a philosopher who had retired from the world, and who cultivated in peace the study of virtue and wisdom, without any of that rigid and morose severity so commonly found in men of his character. He had chosen to build this fine house in which he received strangers with a generosity free from ostentation. He went himself to meet the two travelers, whom he led into a commodious apartment, and desired them to repose themselves. Soon after he came and invited them to a decent and well ordered repast, during which he spoke with great judgment of the last revolutions in Babylon. He seemed to be strongly attached to the queen, and wished that Zadig had appeared in the lists to contend for the crown.

"But the people," added he, "do not deserve to have such a king as Zadig."

Zadig blushed and felt his griefs redoubled. They agreed, in the course of the conversation, that the things of this world did not always answer the wishes of the wise. The hermit maintained that the ways of providence were inscrutable; and that men were in the wrong to judge of a whole, of which they understood but the smallest part. They talked of the passions:

"Ah," said Zadig, "how fatal are their effects!"

"They are the winds," replied the hermit, "that swell the sails of the ship; it is true, they sometimes sink her, but without them she could not sail at all. The bile makes us sick and choleric; but without the bile we could not live. Everything in this world is dangerous, and yet everything in it is necessary."

The conversation turned on pleasure; and the hermit proved that it was a present bestowed by the deity.

"For," said he, "man cannot either give himself sensations or ideas: he receives all; and pain and pleasure proceed from a foreign cause as well as his being."

Zadig was surprised to see a man who had been guilty of such extravagant actions, capable of reasoning with so much judgment and propriety. At last, after a conversation equally entertaining and instructive, the host led back his two guests to their apartment, blessing heaven for having sent him two men possessed of so much wisdom and virtue. He offered them money with such an easy and noble air that it could not possibly give any offence. The hermit refused it, and said that he must now take his leave of him, as he proposed to set out for Babylon in the

morning before it was light. Their parting was tender. Zadig especially felt himself filled with esteem and affection for a man of such an amiable character.

When he and the hermit were alone in their apartment, they spent a long time in praising their host. At break of day the old man awakened his companion.

"We must now depart," said he; "but while all the family are still asleep, I will leave this man a mark of my esteem and affection."

So saying he took a candle and set fire to the house. Zadig, struck with horror, cried aloud, and endeavored to hinder him from committing such a barbarous action; but the hermit drew him away by a superior force, and the house was soon in flames. The hermit, who, with his companion, was already at a considerable distance, looked back to the conflagration with great tranquillity.

"Thanks be to God," said he, "the house of my dear host is entirely destroyed! Happy man!"

At these words Zadig was at once tempted to burst out in laughing, to reproach the reverend father, to beat him, and to run away. But he did none of all these; for still subdued by the powerful ascendancy of the hermit, he followed him, in spite of himself, to the next stage.

This was at the house of a charitable and virtuous widow, who had a nephew fourteen years of age, a handsome and promising youth, and her only hope. She performed the honors of the house as well as she could. Next day, she ordered her nephew to accompany the strangers to a bridge, which being lately broken down, was become extremely dangerous in passing. The young man walked before them with great alacrity. As they were crossing the bridge, the hermit said to the youth:

"Come, I must show my gratitude to thy aunt."

He then took him by the hair, and plunged him into the river. The boy sank, appeared again on the surface of the water, and was swallowed up by the current.

"O monster! O thou most wicked of mankind!" cried Zadig.

"Thou promised to behave with greater patience," said the hermit, interrupting him. "Know, that under the ruins of that house which providence hath set on fire, the master hath found an immense treasure: know, that this young man, whose life providence hath shortened, would have assassinated his aunt in the space of a year, and thee in that of two."

"Who told thee so, barbarian?" cried Zadig, "and though thou hadst read this event in thy book of destinies, art thou permitted to drown a youth who never did thee any harm?"

While the Babylonian was thus exclaiming, he observed that the old man had no longer a beard, and that his countenance assumed the features and complexion of youth. The hermit's habit disappeared, and four beautiful wings covered a majestic body resplendent with light.

"O sent of heaven! O divine angel!" cried Zadig, humbly prostrating himself on the ground, "Hast thou then descended from the empyrean to teach a weak mortal to submit to the eternal decrees of providence?"

"Men," said the angel Jesrad, "judge of all without knowing any thing; and, of all men, thou best deservest to be enlightened."

Zadig begged to be permitted to speak:

"I distrust myself," said he, "but may I presume to ask the favor of thee to clear up one doubt that still remains in my mind. Would it not have been better to have corrected this youth, and made him virtuous, than to have drowned him?"

"Had he been virtuous," replied Jesrad, "and enjoyed a longer life, it would have been his fate to have been assassinated himself, together with the wife he would have married, and the child he would have had by her."

"But why," said Zadig, "is it necessary that there should be crimes and misfortunes, and that these misfortunes should fall on the good?"

"The wicked," replied Jesrad, "are always unhappy. They serve to prove and try the small number of the just that are scattered through the earth; and there is no evil that is not productive of some good."

"But," said Zadig, "suppose there was nothing but good and no evil at all."

"Then," replied Jesrad, "this earth would be another earth: the chain of events would be ranged in another order and directed by wisdom. But this other order, which would be perfect, can exist only in the eternal abode of the Supreme Being, to which no evil can approach. The Deity hath created millions of worlds, among which there is not one that resembles another. This immense variety is the effect of his immense power. There are not two leaves among the trees of the earth, nor two globes in the unlimited expanse of heaven, that are exactly similar: and all that thou seest on the little atom in which thou art born, ought to be, in its proper time and place, according to the immutable decrees of him who comprehends all. Men think that this child, who hath just perished, is fallen into the water by chance; and that it is by the same chance that this house is burned. But there is no such thing as chance. All is either a trial, or a punishment, or a reward, or a foresight. Remember the fisherman, who thought himself the most wretched of mankind. Oromazes sent thee to change his fate. Cease then, frail mortal, to dispute against what thou oughtest to adore."

"But," said Zadig —

As he pronounced the word "But," the angel took his flight toward the tenth sphere. Zadig on his knees adored providence, and submitted. The angel cried to him from on high:

"Direct thy course toward Babylon."

XIX. The Enigmas

Zadig, entranced as it were, and like a man about whose head the thunder had burst, walked at random. He entered Babylon on the very day when those who had fought at the tournaments were assembled in the grand vestibule of the palace to explain the enigmas, and to answer the questions of the grand magi. All the knights were already present, except the knight in green armor. As soon as Zadig appeared in the city, the people crowded around him; every eye was fixed on him, every mouth blessed him, and every heart wished him the empire. The envious man saw him pass; he frowned and turned aside. The people conducted him to the place where the assembly was held. The queen, when informed of his arrival, became a prey to the most violent agitations of hope and fear. She was filled with anxiety and apprehension. She could not comprehend why Zadig was without arms, nor why Itobad wore the white armor.

When the knights who had fought were directed to appear in the assembly, Zadig said: "I have fought as well as the other knights, but another here wears my arms; and while I wait for the honor of proving the truth of my assertion, I demand the liberty of presenting myself to explain the enigmas."

The question was put to vote, and his reputation for probity was so well established, that they admitted him without scruple.

The first question proposed by the grand magi, was "What, of all things in the world is the longest and the shortest, the swiftest and the slowest, the most divisible and the most extended, the most neglected and the most regretted, without which nothing can be done, which devours all that is little, and enlivens all that is great?"

Itobad was to speak. He replied, that so great a man as he did not understand enigmas; and that it was sufficient for him to have conquered by his strength and valor. Some said that the meaning of the enigma was fortune; some, the earth; and others, the light. Zadig said that it was time.

"Nothing," added he, "is longer, since it is the measure of eternity. Nothing is shorter, since it is insufficient for the accomplishment of our projects. Nothing more slow to him that expects, nothing more rapid to him that enjoys. In greatness it extends to infinity, in smallness it is infinitely divisible. All men neglect it, all regret the loss of it; nothing can be done without it. It consigns to oblivion whatever is unworthy of being transmitted to posterity, and it immortalizes such actions as are truly great."

The assembly acknowledged that Zadig was in the right.

The next question was: "What is the thing which we receive without thanks, which we enjoy without knowing how, and which we lose without perceiving it?"

Every one gave his own explanation. Zadig alone guessed that it was

life; and he explained all the other enigmas with the same facility. Itobad always said that nothing was more easy, and that he could have answered them with the same readiness, had he chosen to have given himself the trouble. Questions were then proposed on justice, on the sovereign good, and on the art of government. Zadig's answers were judged to be the most solid, and the people exclaimed:

"What a pity it is, that so great a genius should be so bad a knight!"

"Illustrious lords," said Zadig, "I have had the honor of conquering in the tournaments. It is to me that the white armor belongs. Lord Itobad took possession of it during my sleep. He probably thought it would fit him better than the green. I am now ready to prove in your presence, with my gown and sword, against all that beautiful white armor which he took from me, that it is I who have had the honor of conquering the brave Otamus."

Itobad accepted the challenge with the greatest confidence. He never doubted but that, armed as he was with a helmet, a cuirass, and brassarts, he would obtain an easy victory over a champion in a cap and a night-gown. Zadig drew his sword, saluting the queen, who looked at him with a mixture of fear and joy. Itobad drew his, without saluting any one. He rushed upon Zadig, like a man who had nothing to fear; he was ready to cleave him in two. Zadig knew how to ward off his blows, by opposing the the strongest part of his sword to the weakest of that of his adversary, in such a manner that Itobad's sword was broken. Upon which Zadig, seizing his enemy by the waist, threw him on the ground; and fixing the point of his sword at the extremity of his breast-plate, exclaimed: "Suffer thyself to be disarmed, or thou art a dead man."

Itobad, greatly surprised at the disgrace that happened to such a man as he, was obliged to yield to Zadig, who took from him with great composure, his magnificent helmet, his superb cuirass, his fine brassarts, his shining cuisses; clothed himself with them, and in this dress ran to throw himself at the feet of Astarte. Cador easily proved that the armor belonged to Zadig. He was acknowledged king by the unanimous consent of the whole nation, and especially by that of Astarte, who, after so many calamities, now tasted the exquisite pleasure of seeing her lover worthy, in the eyes of the world, to be her husband. Itobad went home to be called lord in his own house. Zadig was king, and was happy. He recollected what the angel Jesrad had said to him. He even remembered the grain of sand that became a diamond. He sent in search of the robber Arbogad, to whom he gave an honorable post in his army, promising to advance him to the first dignities, if he behaved like a true warrior; and threatening to hang him, if he followed the profession of a robber.

Setoc, with the fair Almona, was called from the heart of Arabia, and placed at the head of the commerce of Babylon. Cador was preferred and distinguished according to his great services. He was the friend of the

king; and the king was then the only monarch on earth that had a friend. The little mute was not forgotten. A fine house was given to the fisherman; and Orcan was condemned to pay him a large sum of money, and to restore him his wife; but the fisherman, who had now become wise, took only the money.

The beautiful Semira could not be comforted for having believed that Zadig would be blind of an eye; nor did Azora cease to lament her attempt to cut off his nose: their griefs, however, he softened by his presents. The capricious beauty, Missouf, was left unnoticed. The envious man died of rage and shame. The empire enjoyed peace, glory, and plenty. This was the happiest age of the earth. It was governed by love and justice. The people blessed Zadig, and Zadig blessed heaven.

PROSPER MÉRIMÉE

(1803–1870)

PROSPER MÉRIMÉE was born at Paris in 1803. Though he was during most of his life a government official, he did a great deal of travelling and much writing. The best and most characteristic of his works are his short stories and short novels. Of these the most readable is *Carmen*, one of the most perfect specimens of the short novel form.

The present translation, which is anonymous, is reprinted from an undated edition, Philadelphia.

CARMEN

I HAVE always suspected geographers of not knowing what they were talking about when they place the battlefield of Munda in the country of the Bastuli-Pœni, near the modern Monda, some leagues to the north of Marbella. According to my own interpretation of the text of the anonymous author of "Bellum Hispaniensis," and after some information collected in the excellent library of the Duke of Osuena, I considered it necessary to seek in the environs of Montilla for the memorable spot where for the last time Cæsar played double or quits against the champions of the Republic. Finding myself in Andalusia about the beginning of the autumn of 1830, I made a rather lengthened excursion with a view to clear up the doubts which still remained in my mind on this question. A pamphlet which I shall shortly publish will, I trust, leave no uncertainty in the minds of all honest archæologists. Pending the time when my dissertation shall resolve once for all this geographical problem which keeps all scientific Europe in suspense, I wish to relate a little story, which will in no degree prejudice the interesting question of the site of Munda.

I had engaged a guide and two horses at Cordova, and set out with Cæsar's Commentaries and a few shirts as my only baggage. One day, while wandering in the elevated part of the plain of Cachena, tired out, dying of thirst, broiled by the vertical sun, I was just consigning Cæsar and the sons of Pompey to the devil, when I perceived at some distance from the path which I was following a little green space dotted with rushes and reeds. These announced the vicinity of a spring. In fact, as I approached I perceived that the seeming greensward was a marsh in which a streamlet, emerging, as it seemed, from a narrow gorge between two lofty

buttresses of the Sierra di Calva, lost itself. I concluded that if I ascended a little farther I should find clearer and fresher water, and fewer leeches and frogs, with perhaps a little shade between the boulders. At the entrance of the gorge my horse neighed, and another horse, which I could not see, immediately replied.

I had scarcely advanced a hundred paces when the gorge suddenly opened out and displayed to my view a kind of natural amphitheatre, entirely shaded by the lofty cliffs which enclosed it. It was impossible to meet with any spot which promised a traveller a more agreeable resting-place. At the base of the perpendicular cliffs the stream rushed out and fell bubbling into a little basin lined with sand white as snow. Five or six beautiful and verdant oaks, always sheltered from the wind here, and watered by the stream, rose beside its source and covered it with their leafy shade; lastly, around the basin grew a rich fine grass which offered a better bed than one could find in any inn for ten leagues round.

But the honor of discovering this charming retreat did not rest with me. A man was already reposing there, and was no doubt asleep when I penetrated thither. Awakened by the neighing of the horses, he arose and approached his steed, which had taken advantage of master's sleeping to make a good meal of the luxuriant grass around him. His owner was a young fellow of medium height, but of robust build, and with a gloomy and proud look on his face. His complexion, which may have been good, had by exposure become even darker than his hair. In one hand he grasped the halter of his steed, in the other he held a brass blunderbuss. I must confess that at first the sight of the blunderbuss and the fierce aspect of the man surprised me; but I no longer believed in brigands, having only heard of them, but never having met any of them. Besides, I had seen so many honest farmers armed to the teeth to proceed to market that the mere sight of fire-arms was not sufficient evidence upon which to base the dishonesty of the unknown. And then I thought, what would he want with my shirts and my volume of Elzevir Commentaries?

So I saluted the man of the blunderbuss with an easy bow, and inquired with a smile whether I had disturbed him from his siesta. Without answering he measured me with his eyes from head to foot; then, as if satisfied with his scrutiny, he paid the same attention to my guide, who was approaching. I perceived the latter turn pale, and pull up with every symptom of terror. An unlucky meeting, I thought; but prudence immediately counselled me not to display any uneasiness. I dismounted, told the guide to unbridle the horses, and kneeling down beside the spring, I plunged my head and hands into it; then lying flat on the ground like the wicked soldiers of Gideon, I took a deep draught.

Nevertheless, I managed to keep an eye on the guide and the unknown. The former approached with manifest hesitation; the latter did not appear to harbor any evil intentions against us, for he had released his horse

again, and his blunderbuss, which he had at first grasped horizontally and held "ready," was now held muzzle downwards.

Not thinking it worth while to be offended at the slight value put upon me, I lay down upon the grass, and in an easy manner asked the man with the blunderbuss whether he had a tinder box about him. At the same time I took out my cigar-case. The unknown, still in silence, fumbled in his pocket for the box, and taking it out, hastened to strike a light for me. He was evidently getting sociable, for he came and sat down opposite me, but without putting aside his weapon. My cigar alight, I selected the best of those remaining in my case, and inquired whether he would smoke.

"Yes, sir," he replied. These were the first words he had uttered, and I remarked that he did not pronounce the S's in the Andalusian manner, from which circumstance I concluded that he was a traveller like myself, less the archæological inspiration.

"You will find this pretty good," I said, as I handed him a genuine regalia Habaña.

He bowed slightly, lighted his cigar from mine, thanked me with another bow, and began to smoke with every appearance of intense satisfaction.

"Ah!" he exclaimed as he permitted the smoke to escape slowly from his mouth and nostrils, "what a time it is since I have smoked!"

In Spain a cigar offered and accepted establishes friendly relations, as in the East the partaking of bread and salt ensures hospitality. My companion proved himself more communicative than I had hoped. However, although he declared himself a native of the province of Montilla, he appeared to be very slightly acquainted with the district. He did not know the name of the charming valley in which we were resting. He could not name any village in the neighborhood; and at length, in reply to my question as to whether he had not noticed in the environs some ruined walls and carved stones, he confessed that he never paid any attention to such things. On the other hand, he showed himself a connoisseur in horseflesh. He criticised my horse — which was not difficult; then he told me the pedigree of his own, which came from the famous Cordova stud: a noble animal indeed, and so insensible to fatigue that, as his master said, he had on one occasion made ninety miles in the day at speed. In the midst of this tirade the unknown suddenly checked himself, as if surprised and sorry that he had said so much.

"It was when I was in a great hurry to reach Cordova," he continued with some embarrassment, "I had to prosecute a lawsuit."

As he was speaking he looked at my guide, Antonio, who lowered his eyes.

The shade and the spring charmed me so that I recollected some slices of an excellent ham which my friends in Montilla had put in my guide's haversack. I made him fetch them, and invited the stranger to join me in my impromptu picnic. If he had not smoked for a long while, it seemed to

me that he must have fasted for forty-eight hours, at least. He ate like a famished wolf. I thought my appearance had been quite providential for the poor devil. My guide, however, ate little, drank less, and spoke not at all, although at the beginning of our journey he had been a tremendous chatterer. The presence of our guest seemed to be a restraint upon him, and a kind of mutual distrust kept them apart; the cause of this I could not determine.

The last morsels of bread and ham had been eaten; we had each smoked a second cigar; I ordered the guide to bridle the horses, and I was about to take leave of my new acquaintance, when he asked me where I intended to pass the night.

Before I could attend to a sign from my guide, I had replied that I was making for the Venta del Cuervo.

"A bad lodging for such a person as you, sir. I am going thither, and if you will permit me to accompany you we will go together."

"Very willingly," I replied as I mounted my horse. My guide, who was holding the stirrup, made me another sign. I replied to it by shrugging my shoulders, as if to assure him that I was quite easy in my mind; and then we started.

The mysterious signs of Antonio, his uneasiness, the few words that escaped the unknown, particularly the account of the thirty-league ride, and the by no means plausible explanation which he had offered, had already formed my opinion concerning my travelling companion. I had no doubt whatever that I had to do with a *contrabandista*, perhaps with a brigand. What matter? I knew enough of the Spanish character to be certain that I had nothing to fear from a man who had eaten and smoked with me. His very presence was a protection against all untoward adventures. Moreover, I was rather glad to know what a brigand was like. One does not meet them every day, and there is a certain charm in finding oneself in company with a dangerous person, particularly when one finds him gentle and subdued.

I hoped to lead the unknown to confide in me by degrees, and notwithstanding the winks of my guide, I led the conversation to the bandits. Of course I spoke of them with all respect. There was at that time a famous bandit in Andalusia named José-Maria, whose exploits were in every one's mouth. "Suppose I am in the company of José-Maria!" I said to myself. I told all the ancedotes of this hero that I knew — all those in his praise, of course, and loudly expressed my admiration of his bravery and generosity.

"José-Maria is only a scamp," replied the stranger coldly.

"Is he doing himself justice, or is it only modesty on his part?" I asked myself; for, after considering my companion carefully, I began to apply to him the description of José-Maria which I had read posted up on the gates of many towns of Andalusia. Yes, it is he certainly. Fair hair, blue

eyes, large mouth, good teeth, small hands, a fine shirt, a velvet vest with silver buttons, gaiters of white skin, a bay horse. No doubt about it. But let us respect his incognito!

We arrived at the Venta. It was just what he had described it — that is to say, one of the most miserable inns that I had ever seen. One large room served for kitchen, parlor and bedroom. A fire was burning on a flat stone in the middle of the room, and the smoke went out through a hole in the roof, or rather it stopped there, and hung in a cloud some feet above the ground. Beside the wall, on the floor, were extended five or six horsecloths, which were the beds for travellers. About twenty paces from the house — or rather from the single room which I have described — was a kind of shed, which did duty for a stable. In this delightful retreat there was for the time being no other individual besides an old woman and a little girl of ten or twelve years old, both as black as soot, and in rags.

"Here," thought I, "are all that remain of the population of the ancient Munda Bætica. O Cæsar, O Sextus Pompey, how astonished you would be if you were to return to this mundane sphere!"

When she perceived my companion the old woman uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"Ah, Señor Don José!" she cried.

Don José frowned and raised his hand with a gesture of command which made the old woman pause. I turned to my guide, and with a sign imperceptible to José made Antonio understand that I needed no information respecting the man with whom I had to pass the night. The supper was better than I had anticipated. They served up upon a small table about a foot high an old cock fricassied with rice and pimentos, then pimentos in oil, and lastly, *gaspacho*, a kind of pimento salad. Three such highly seasoned dishes obliged us often to have recourse to the flask of Montilla, which we found delicious.

Having supped, and perceiving a mandolin hanging against the wall — there are mandolins everywhere in Spain — I asked the little girl who waited on us if she knew how to play it.

"No," she replied; "but Don José plays it very well."

"Will you be so good as to sing something?" I said to him. "I passionately love your national music."

"I can refuse nothing to so polite a gentleman, who gives me such excellent cigars," replied José good-humoredly, and being handed the mandolin he sang to his own accompaniment. His voice was harsh, but rather agreeable; the air was sad and wild; as for the words, I did not understand one of them.

"If I am not mistaken," I said, "that is not a Spanish air which you have just sung. It strikes me as resembling the *zorzicos* which I have heard in the 'Provinces,' and the words seem to be in the Basque tongue."

"Yes," replied José with a sombre air. He placed the mandolin on the

ground, and sat contemplating the dying embers with a singularly sad expression. Illuminated by the lamp placed on the little table, his face, at once noble and ferocious, recalled Milton's Satan. Like him, perhaps, my companion was thinking of a heaven he had quitted — of the exile to which his sin had condemned him. I endeavored to engage him in conversation, but he did not reply, so absorbed was he in his sad reflections.

By this time the old woman had retired to rest in a corner of the room behind a primitive screen formed of a rag suspended from a cord. The little girl had followed her into this retreat reserved for the fair sex. Then my guide, rising, invited me to follow him to the stable, but at this José, as if waking up with a start, demanded in a rough tone whither he was going.

"To the stable," replied the guide.

"What for? The horses have plenty to eat. Lie down here; the gentleman will permit it."

"I am afraid the Señor's horse may be ill. I want the Señor to see it; perhaps he will know what to do."

It was evident that Antonio wished to speak to me in private, but I did not care to arouse Don José's suspicions, and under the circumstances it appeared to me that the best line to take would be to display the greatest confidence. So I informed Antonio that I knew nothing about horses, and that I was very sleepy. Don José followed the man to the stable, and soon returned alone. He told me that the horse had nothing the matter with him, but the guide valued the steed so highly that he was rubbing him with his vest to make him perspire, and intended to continue the occupation during the night. However, I was soon extended beneath the rugs carefully wrapped in my cloak so as to avoid contact with them. After begging pardon for the liberty which he was taking in lying close to me, Don José lay down before the door, first having renewed the priming of his blunderbuss which he took care to place beneath the haversack which served him for a pillow. Five minutes after we had wished each other good-night we were both buried in profound slumber.

I had believed that I was sufficiently tired to sleep in such a place as that, but after an hour a very disagreeable itching aroused me from my first nap. As soon as I understood the nature of the disturbing cause, I rose, firmly convinced that it would be better to pass the night in the open air than under such an inhospitable roof. I gained the door on tiptoe, and stepping over Don José, who was sleeping the sleep of the just, I managed to quit the house without arousing him. Near the door was a large wooden bench; on this I lay down and settled myself for the night as well as I could. I was about to shut my eyes for the second time, when I fancied I perceived the shadow of a man and a horse passing in front of me and not making the slightest noise. I jumped up, and thought I recognized Antonio. Surprised to see him out of the stable at such an hour I advanced to meet him. He stopped when he perceived me approaching.

"Where is he?" asked Antonio in a low voice.

"In the venta: he is asleep, he has no fear of fleas. Why have you brought the horse out?"

Then I remarked that Antonio — so as not to make any noise in quitting the shed, had carefully enveloped the horse's feet in the fragments of an old cloth.

"Speak lower, in the name of God," he said. "You do not know who that man is. He is José Navarro, the most famous bandit in Andalusia. I have been making signs to you all day which you would not understand."

"Bandit or not, what does it matter to me?" I replied. "He has not robbed us, and I will wager that he has no intention of doing so."

"All very well, but there is a price of two hundred ducats on his head. I know where there is a detachment of lancers about a league and a half distant; and before daybreak I will bring some stout fellows here. I would have taken his horse, but he is so vicious that no one save Navarro can go near him."

"What the devil are you about?" I said. "What harm has the poor man done to you that should betray him? Besides, are you certain that he *is* the brigand you say he is?"

"Perfectly certain. Just now he followed me into the stable and said, 'You seem to know me. If you tell this good gentleman who I am I will wring your neck!' Remain with him, sir; you have nothing to fear. So long as you are there he will have no suspicions."

While we were speaking we had got some distance from the venta, and no one in it would hear the sound of the horse's hoofs. In the twinkling of an eye Antonio took off the wrappings and prepared to mount. I endeavored to detain him by prayers, and even by threats.

"I am a poor devil, sir," he replied, "and I cannot afford to lose two hundred ducats; particularly when I can also rid the country of such vermin as is yonder. But take care! If Navarro wakes he will rush for his blunderbuss, so mind yourself. I have gone too far to retreat. You can suit yourself."

The scoundrel was already in the saddle. He spurred his horse, and was soon hidden from my view in the darkness.

I was very much annoyed with my guide, and not a little uneasy. After a moment's reflection I made up my mind what course to pursue, and reentered the venta. Don José was still asleep, repairing, no doubt, the fatigues and watches of many days preceding. I was obliged to shake him roughly before I could arouse him. Never shall I forget his fierce look and the action with which he sought to grasp his blunderbuss, which I had removed as a matter of precaution.

"Sir," said I, "I ask your pardon for disturbing you, but I have a simple question to ask. Would you be pleased to see half a dozen lancers come here?"

He leaped to his feet, and in a terrible tone said, "Who has told you that?"

"No matter whence comes the advice so that it is good."

"Your guide has betrayed me, but he shall answer for it. Where is he?"

"I do not know. In the stable, I think, but some one has told me" ——

"Who told you? The old woman perhaps?"

"Some one whom I do not know. Without more words, have you — yes or no — any reason which renders it advisable for you to avoid the soldiers? If you have, do not lose time — if not, then good-night; and I beg your pardon for wakening you."

"Ah, your guide — your guide! I suspected him at first; but his account will be settled! Adieu, sir; God reward you for the service I owe you. I am not so bad as you believe me to be; yes, there is still in me something which deserves the sympathy of a brave man. Adieu, sir, I have only one regret, and that is my inability to pay my debt to you."

"For the service which I render you, Don José, promise me to suspect no one — do not think of vengeance. Hold — here are some cigars for you. *Bon voyage!*" — and I extended my hand to him.

He shook mine without replying; seized his blunderbuss and his sack, and after saying a few words to the old woman in a slang I did not understand, he hurried to the shed. A few minutes afterwards I heard him gallop away into the open country.

As for me, I retired to my bench but I could not sleep. I interrogated myself as to whether I had any right to save a robber — perhaps a murderer — from the gallows, and that only because I had eaten with him some ham and rice. Had I not betrayed my guide, who was upholding the laws? had I not exposed myself to the revenge of a villain? But the duties of hospitality? "A prejudice of savagery," I said to myself; "I shall have to be responsible for all the crimes that the bandit hereafter may commit." However, *is* it a prejudice — this instinct of conscience which defies all reasoning? Perhaps in the delicate situation in which I was placed, I might be able to escape without remorse? I was balanced in the greatest uncertainty respecting the morality of my action when I saw half a dozen horse-soldiers returning with Antonio, who kept prudently in the rear. I met them half-way, and informed them that the bandit had escaped two hours previously. The old woman, when questioned by the corporal, replied that she knew Navarro, but that, living alone, she did not dare risk her life by denouncing him. She added that he was always in the habit of departing in the middle of the night when he came to her house. As for me, I was compelled to proceed a distance of some leagues to show my passport, and sign a declaration before the alcalde, after which I was permitted to resume my archæological researches. Antonio nursed a grudge against me — for he suspected that it was I who had prevented him from gaining the reward of two hundred ducats. Nevertheless we parted good friends at Cordova, where I presented him with a gratuity as large as the condition of my finances permitted me to give.

II

I SPENT some days in Cordova. Some MS. in the Domincian library had been indicated to me, and in this I expected to find some interesting information concerning the ancient Munda. Being very well received by the good monks I passed the days in their monastery; and in the evenings I walked about the town. At Cordova at sunset there are always a number of idlers about the quay which borders the right bank of the Guadalquiver. There one breathes the odors of a tannery which still preserves the old reputation of the country for the preparation of leather; but on the other hand one enjoys a sight which is well worth seeing. Some minutes before the Angelus is rung a number of women assemble on the bank of the river at the end of the quay, which is raised considerably. Not a man dares to mingle with this troop. Immediately the Angelus sounds night is supposed to have set in. At the last stroke of the bell all the women undress and plunge into the water. Then arise cries, laughter, and an infernal din. From the top of the quay the men contemplate the bathers, staring at them with open eyes, but seeing little. Nevertheless these white and undefined forms, which are perceptible in the deep azure waters of the river, cause poetic minds to conceive, and with a little imagination it is not difficult to represent to oneself Diana and her nymphs in the bath, without fear of sharing the fate of Actæon. I was informed that on one occasion some scapegraces, by bribing the bell-ringer of the cathedral, induced him to ring the Angelus twenty minutes in advance of the usual hour. Although it was broad daylight, the nymphs of the Guadalquiver did not hesitate, and trusting more to the Angelus than the sun, they made innocence their bathing-dress — which is always of the simplest fashion. I was not there. In my time the bell-ringer was incorruptible, the twilight not very clear, and only a cat would have been able to distinguish the oldest orange-seller from the prettiest *grisette* in Cordova.

One evening at the hour when there is nothing to be seen, I was smoking, leaning upon the parapet of the quay, when a woman ascended the steps which led down to the river, and seated herself close to me. She had in her hair a large bunch of jessamine, which emitted a strong perfume. She was simply, perhaps poorly, clad, in black, as most of the girls are in the evening. The fashionable ladies only wear black in the morning, in the evening they dress *a la Francesca.* As she approached me the bather let fall on her shoulders the mantilla with which she had covered her head, and in the starlight I could perceive that she was pretty, young, well made, and that she had very large eyes. I quickly threw away my cigar. She at once appreciated this attention — a politeness entirely French — and hastened to inform me that she liked the smell of tobacco-smoke very much, and that even she herself smoked when she could get very mild cigarettes. Fortunately I had some such in my case, and hastened to offer them to

her. She condescended to take one, and lighted it at the burning end of a cork which a child brought us for a halfpenny. Smoking together we conversed so long — the pretty bather and I — that we found ourselves alone upon the quay. I did not consider that there was anything indiscreet in suggesting that we should go and have some ices at a *neveria*. After some modest hesitation she consented, but before deciding she wished to know what time it was. I made my repeater strike the hour, and this astonished her very much. "What inventions they have in your country! What countryman are you? English, no doubt."

"A Frenchman, and your humble servant, mademoiselle, or madame. You are probably of Cordova?"

"No."

"You are at least Andalusian? I fancy I can detect as much in your soft accent."

"If you remark people's accents so closely you ought to be able to divine who I am."

"I believe you are of the Holy Land — a few steps from Paradise."

I had learnt this metaphor, which refers to Andalusia, from my friend Francisco Sevilla, the well-known *picador*.

"Bah! — Paradise! People here say it is not for such as we."

"Then you must be Moorish, or —" I stopped, not liking to say "a Jewess."

"Go along! go along! You see quite well that I am a gypsy. Do you wish me to tell you *la baji* (good-fortune)? Have you ever heard of La Carmencita? I am she!"

I was such an infidel at that time — it is fifteen years ago, remember — that I did not recoil with horror at finding myself in company with a sorceress. "All right," I said to myself. "Last week I supped with a bandit — a highway robber; to-day I am eating ices with a handmaiden of the devil! When travelling it is well to see everything!" I had besides another reason for cultivating her acquaintance. When I quitted the University I confess to my shame that I had lost some time in studying the occult sciences, and many times I had attempted to summon up the spirits of darkness. Although long before cured of my passion for such researches, I nevertheless still retained a certain curiosity regarding all superstitions, and it was a treat to me to ascertain to what pitch the arts of magic had attained amongst the gypsies.

As we chatted we had entered the *neveria*, and seated ourselves at a small table lighted by a wax candle placed within a glass shade. I had then plenty of opportunity to observe the *gitana*, while respectable people eating their ices were astounded to see me in such society.

I very much doubt whether Mademoiselle Carmen was of the true blood — at any rate, she was the prettiest of all the women of her race whom I ever met. To be beautiful, a woman, say the Spaniards, must unite in her-

self thirty points; or, if you please, you may define her by ten adjectives, each applicable to three parts of her person. For instance, she should have three black points — the eyes, the eyelids, and the eyebrows; three delicate, fine — the fingers, the lips, and the hair, &c. See Brantôme for the others. My Bohemian could not pretend to the necessary perfection. Her skin, though quite smooth, approached somewhat to the coppery tinge. Her eyes were obliquely set, but large and full; her lips rather thick, but well cut, and permitted the teeth — white as blanched almonds — to be seen. Her hair was perhaps a trifle coarse, but had a blue sheen running through it, like that one sees in a raven's wings, and was long and luxuriant. Not to weary you with a detailed description, I will merely say that with each fault she united a good point, which came out perhaps more by virtue of the contrast. She was of a strange and savage beauty — a face which at first surprised you, but it was one you could never forget. Her eyes especially had an expression at once voluptuous and fierce, which I have never since noticed in any human eyes. "Eye of gypsy, eye of wolf" is a Spanish saying which denotes quick observation. If you have not time to go to the Zoological Gardens to study the expression of the wolf's eyes, look at your cat when he is watching a sparrow!

One felt that it would be ridiculous to have one's fortune told in a café, so I begged the pretty sorceress to permit me to accompany her home. She agreed without difficulty, but again she was anxious to know how time sped, and begged me to strike my repeater once more.

"Is it really gold?" she asked, as she gazed at the watch attentively.

When we resumed our way it was dark night, the majority of the shops were shut, and the streets were almost deserted. We passed the bridge over the Guadalquiver, and at the end of the suburb we reached a house with nothing of the palatial about it. A child opened the door to us. The gypsy said something to her in a language unknown to me, which I have since discovered was the Romany, or *chepe-calli*, the idiom of the *gitanos*. The child immediately disappeared, leaving us in a room of considerable dimensions, furnished with a small table, two stools, and a chest. I must not forget a jar of water, a pile of oranges, and a hank of onions.

As soon as we were alone the gypsy took from the chest a pack of cards, which appeared to have seen much service, a loadstone, a dried chameleon, and some other objects necessary for the practice of her art. Then she bade me cross my left hand with a piece of silver, and the magic ceremonies began. It is useless to repeat her predictions, but by her manner of operating it was evident that she was a practised sorceress.

Unfortunately it was not long ere we were disturbed. The door was suddenly and violently thrown open; a man wrapped up to the eyes in a brown cloak entered the room, and apostrophised the gypsy in a by no means gentle fashion. I did not understand what he was saying, but the tone of his voice indicated that he was in a very bad temper. The *gitana*

exhibited neither surprise nor anger at his appearance, but she hastened to meet him, and with extraordinary volubility addressed some words to him in the mysterious language which she had already made use of in my presence. The word *payllo*, frequently repeated, was the only one I understood. I was aware that by this term the gypsies designate any stranger. Supposing that it referred to me, I anticipated a rather delicate explanation; already I had grasped one of the legs of the stool, and was communing with myself as to the precise moment when I should hurl it at the head of the intruder, when the latter, pushing the girl rudely aside, advanced towards me, and then recoiling, exclaimed —

"Ah, sir, it is *you* then!"

I looked at him in my turn, and recognized my acquaintance Don José. At that moment a feeling of regret that I had not let him be hanged came over me.

"Ah, it is you, my brave fellow!" I exclaimed, laughing with as little bitterness as I could manage. "You have interrupted mademoiselle and me at the very moment when she was revealing to me some very interesting things."

"Always the same — this shall finish it!" he muttered between his teeth, and darting a furious look at her.

The gypsy nevertheless continued to address him in her language. She got more excited by degrees. Her eyes flashed, became suffused with blood, and terrible in their aspect; her features contracted; she stamped her foot; it seemed to me that she was inciting him to do something which he had some hesitation in doing. What it was I understood only too well when I saw her pass and repass her little hand across her neck. I was constrained to believe that it was a question of cutting somebody's throat, and I had some suspicion that this throat was my own!

To all this torrent of eloquence Don José only replied sharply in a few words. Then the gypsy darted at him a glance of profound contempt, and seating herself *a la turque* in a corner of the room, she selected an orange from the heap, peeled it, and began to eat it.

Don José took me by the arm, opened the door, and led me into the street. We proceeded about two hundred paces in silence. Then extending his hand he said, "Keep straight on and you will come to the bridge!"

He immediately turned his back upon me, and hurried away. I reached my inn feeling somewhat sheepish and in bad temper. The worst of it was that when I undressed, I perceived my watch was missing!

Several considerations prevented me from seeking to recover it in the morning, or to solicit the aid of the law in seeking it. I finished my work on the manuscript in the convent, and started for Seville. After several months' wandering in Andalusia I returned to Madrid and I was obliged to pass Cordova. I had no intention of making a long stay there, for I had taken a dislike to this fine city and its bathers. However, there were some

friends to be visited, some commissions to be executed, which would detain me in the ancient capital of the Mussulman princes for three or four days.

As soon as I made my appearance at the convent of the Dominicans one of the fathers, who had always displayed the keenest interest in my researches concerning the site of Munda, welcomed me with open arms.

"God be praised," he said. "Welcome indeed, my dear friend. We believed you dead, and I myself have said *paters* and *aves* — which I do not regret — for the repose of your soul! So you have not been assassinated; we knew you had been robbed!"

"How so?" I inquired in surprise.

"Well, you remember you used to strike that beautiful watch of yours when we wanted to know the time in the library. It has been found, and will be returned to you"——

"That is to say," interrupted I, somewhat put out of countenance, "supposing I have lost it."

"The scoundrel is in custody," continued the friar; "and as we knew he was the kind of fellow to shoot a man in order to take a *piecette*, we were all terribly afraid he had killed you. I will go with you to the corrégidor, and we will recover your beautiful watch. And then don't say that justice is not done in Spain!"

"I confess," I replied, "that I would rather lose my watch than be instrumental in hanging a poor devil, particularly because — because"——

"Oh, do not be in the least alarmed; he is well certified to, and they cannot hang him twice. When I say hang him, I mean garotte him. This robber of yours is a *hidalgo*, and so he will be garotted the day after tomorrow without fail. You perceive that a robbery more or less can make no difference in his case. I would to Heaven it were only robbery, but he has committed many murders, each one more horrible than that which preceded it."

"What is his name?"

"He is known in this country as José Navarro, but he has another Basque name which neither you nor I shall ever succeed in pronouncing. He is a man to see, and you who love to study the curious characteristics of the country ought not to neglect the opportunity of learning how in Spain these scoundrels are sent out of the world. He is in the chapel, and Fra Martinez will conduct you thither."

My friend the Dominican insisted so strongly upon my seeing the apparatus for the *petit pendement pien choli*, that I was unable to resist him. I went to see the prisoner, furnished with a bundle of cigars, which I trusted would atone for my intrusion.

They admitted me to see Don José just as he was finishing a meal. He bowed coldly to me and thanked me politely for the cigars which I had brought him. After counting them he selected a few and returned the remainder, observing that he should not want any more than those he then had!

I inquired whether by money or some little influence I could not in some measure ameliorate his condition. At first he shrugged his shoulders, smiling sadly; but after a while changing his mind he begged that I would cause a mass to be said for his soul.

"Would you," he added, timidly, "would you have another said for a woman who injured you?"

"Assuredly," I replied, "but I do not think that any woman has injured me in this country."

He took my hand and shook it gravely. After a momentary silence, he resumed —

"Dare I venture to ask you a favor? When you return to your own land perhaps you will pass through Navarre, at least you will pass by Vittoria, which is not very far from it."

"Yes," I replied, "I shall certainly pass by Vittoria, but it is not unlikely that I shall turn aside to Pampeluna and on your account I will willingly make the *detour*."

"Well, if you go to Pampeluna you will find more than one object of interest to detain you. It a beautiful city. I will give you this medal (he showed me a silver medal which he wore round his neck), you will wrap it in paper" — he paused for an instant to master his emotion — "and you will send it or cause it to be sent to a good woman, whose address I will give you. You will say that I am dead, but do not tell her in what manner I died."

I promised to carry out his wishes. I saw him again on the following morning, and I passed a portion of the day with him. It was from his own lips that I learned the sad story which follows:

III

I was born, said he, at Elizondo, in the valley of Batzan. My name is Don José Lizarabengoa, and you know Spain well enough, sir, to understand that I am of the Basque country, and of ancient Christian lineage. If I take the title of Don it is because I have a right to it, and if I were in Elizondo I would show you my genealogy on parchment. I was destined for the Church, and compelled to study for it, but I did not profit by it. I was too fond of playing tennis and that was the ruin of me. When we Navarros play tennis we forget all else. One day when I had won a match a youth of Alava picked a quarrel with me. We fought with *maquilas*, and still I had the advantage, but I was obliged to fly the country. I fell in with some dragoons and enlisted in the Almanza regiment of cavalry. People from our parts soon pick up the trade of a soldier. I quickly became a corporal, and was in a fair way to become quarter-master when to my misfortune I was put on guard at the tobacco manufactory of Seville. If you have ever been to Seville you have noticed that great building out-

side the ramparts near the Guadalquiver. It seems as if I can still see the door and the guard-house beside it. When they are off duty the Spaniards play cards or sleep, but I, a free Navarro, was always accustomed to employ myself. I made a chain of brass wire to sustain my priming-needle. One day my comrades exclaimed, "The clock is striking, the girls are going to work!" You know there are about four hundred or five hundred women employed in the cigar-making. They roll the cigars in the large room into which no man is permitted to enter without permission from the municipal magistrate, because the girls work in undress, the young ones particularly, when the weather is warm. When the young women return to work after dinner, many young fellows go to see them pass, and they are some of all sorts. There are few of these ladies who would refuse a silk mantilla, and the inexperienced ones at this fishing have only to stoop to catch a fish. While the other men were looking on I remained on my bench near the door. I was young then and home-sick, and did not believe that there were anywhere pretty girls without the blue skirts, and the plaits of hair falling over their shoulders. Besides, these Andalusians frightened me; I had not yet grown accustomed to their manners. They were always full of raillery, never serious or speaking a sensible word. I was working away at my chain when I heard some townspeople say, "Look at the *gitanilla!*" I looked up and saw her. It was on a Friday, and I shall never forget it. I saw that Carmen, whom you know of, at whose house I found you some months ago.

She wore a red skirt, very short, which exposed to view her white silk stockings, with many a hole in them, and tiny shoes of morocco leather, tied with scarlet ribbons. She had thrown back her mantilla so as to display her shoulders, and an immense bunch of acacia blossom, which was stuck in her chemise. She also carried a flower in her mouth, and she walked with a movement of a thoroughbred filly from the Cordova stud. In my country a woman in such a costume would have made people cross themselves. At Seville every one paid some gay compliment to the girl on her appearance. She replied to them all, looking sideways as she went along, with her hand on her hip, as bold as the true gypsy she was. At first she did not take my fancy, and I continued my occupation, but she — after the nature of women and cats, which will not come when they are called and which come when they are not called — stopped in front of me and said, in the Andalusian form: —

"Gossip, will you give me your chain to hang the key of my strong box on?"

"It is to hang my priming-needle on," I replied.

"Your priming-needle! Ah, the señor makes lace, then; he requires needles."

Every one began to laugh at me. I felt myself growing red, and could make no reply.

"Well, my hearty," she continued, "make me seven ells of black lace for a mantilla, thou primer of my soul."

Then, taking the flower from between her lips, she flipped it at me with a movement of her thumb, and struck me between the eyes. Sir, I felt as if I had received a bullet in the forehead. I did not know what to do with myself; I stood as stiff as a board. When she had entered the factory I perceived the flower, which had fallen at my feet. I do not know what possessed me, but I picked it up when my comrades were not looking, and put it carefully in my vest. That was the first act of folly.

Two or three hours after, while I was still thinking of the incident, a porter arrived at the guard-house, out of breath and greatly discomposed. He told us that a woman had been assassinated in the great room of the factory, and that it was necessary to have the guard in. The sergeant ordered me to take two men and go and see what was the matter. I took the men and went up. Picture to yourself the sight that met my view when I entered — about three hundred women *en chemise*, or with as little as possible on them — screaming, crying, gesticulating, and making such a row that you couldn't have heard thunder. At one side a female was sprawling on the floor drenched in blood, with a cross — an X — cut on her face with a knife. Opposite the wounded woman, who was being tended by the best of the females, I perceived Carmen, restrained by five or six of her associates. The wounded woman kept crying out that she was dying and wanted a priest. Carmen said nothing; she clenched her teeth, and rolled her eyes like a chameleon.

"What is all this about?" I inquired. I had considerable difficulty in ascertaining what had passed, for all the women talked at once.

It would appear that the injured woman had boasted of having sufficient money in her pocket to buy a donkey at the market of Triona.

"Shut up!" exclaimed Carmen, who had a tongue of her own, "why, you haven't enough to purchase a brush."

The other, stung by the reproach, perhaps because she felt there were some suspicions concerning the article, replied that she did not know anything about brushes, not having the honor to be a gypsy or a daughter of Satan, but that Mademoiselle Carmencita would soon make the donkey's acquaintance when the corrégidor led it out for a walk with two lacqueys behind to beat the flies off.

"Well, then, for my part," replied Carmen, "I will make places for flies to settle on your cheeks, for I will make a draught-board of them."

On that, criss-cross, she began, with the knife she used for cutting the cigars, to slash a St. Andrew's cross on the woman's face.

The case was perfectly clear. I seized Carmen by the arm.

"Sister," I said politely, "you must come with me."

She darted a look of recognition at me, but she said resignedly:—

"Let us go then. Where is my mantilla?"

She put it over her head in such a fashion as only to permit her fine eyes to be seen, and followed my two men as quiet as a lamb. When we reached the guard-house the quarter-master said the case was a serious one, and that he must send the culprit to prison. I was told off to conduct her. I placed her between two dragoons, and I marched behind as a corporal should do. We started for the city. At first the gypsy maintained a strict silence, but in Serpent Street — you know it, it well deserves its name with all its windings — in Serpent Street she began her manœuvres by letting her mantilla fall upon her shoulders so as to enable me to see her winning face, and, turning towards me as far as she could, she said: —

"My officer, whither are you taking me?"

"To prison, my poor child," I replied, as gently as I could — just as a true soldier ought to talk to his prisoner, particularly when the prisoner is a woman.

"Alas! what will become of me! Señor officer, have pity on me! You are so young, so kind." Then, in a lower tone, she continued, "Let me escape. I will give you a piece of *bar lachi*, which will make you beloved by all the women."

(The *bar lachi*, sir, is a loadstone, with which the gypsies say one may work charms when one knows how to make use of it. Give a woman a pinch of it, grated, in a glass of water, and she will not be able to resist you.)

I replied, as seriously as I could —

"We are not here to talk nonsense, we must proceed to the prison; such is the order, and there is no help for it."

We Basque people have a dialect which the Spaniards can readily recognize, but there is scarcely one of them who can even say *vai jaoni* (yes, sir). Carmen, then, had no difficulty in discovering that I came from the Provinces. You know, sir, that the gypsies, having no definite country of their own, are always wandering hither and thither, speaking all languages, and the majority of them are as much at home in Portugal as in France, or in the Provinces, or Catalonia; even amongst the Moors and the English they can make themselves understood. Carmen, then, knew the Basque dialect pretty well.

"*Laguna ene bihotsarena*, friend of my soul," she said suddenly. "Are you from the country?"

(Our language, sir, is so beautiful that when we hear it spoken in a strange place it thrills us. I wish I had a confessor from the Provinces, he muttered. Then, after a pause, he resumed: —)

"I am from Elizondo," I replied in Basque, very much moved at hearing my native tongue.

"And I am from Etchalar," she said. (That is a district some four hours' journey from us.) I was brought to Seville by the gypsies. I have been working in the factory so as to make sufficient to take me back to

Navarre again to my dear mother, whose only support I am, and the little *barretcea* (garden), with its twenty cider apple trees. Ah, if I were only there again, near the white mountains! They have insulted me because I do not belong to this country of pick-pockets, merchants of rotten oranges; and these low women are all against me because I declared that all their 'jacks' of Seville, with their knives, would not frighten one fellow from our part of the country, with only his blue *beret* and his *maquilla*."

She was lying, sir; she has always lied. Indeed I doubt whether in all her life that girl ever spoke a word of truth. But when she spoke I believed her. She was stronger than I. She talked broken Basque, and I believed she came from Navarre. Her eyes, mouth and complexion stamped her a gypsy. I was befooled — mad — and no longer paid attention to anything. I thought that if the two Spaniards with me had said anything in disparagement of the country I would have slashed them across the face just as she had treated her comrade. In fact I was like a man intoxicated. I began to talk nonsense, and was ready to commit any folly.

"If I were to give you a push, countryman, and you were to fall down, I should have only those two Castilian conscripts to detain me," she said.

Faith, I quite forgot my orders, and I replied: "Well, my friend, my countrywoman, try it; and may Our Lady of the Mountain aid you." At that moment we were passing by one of those narrow alleys of which there are so many in Seville. Suddenly Carmen turned round and gave me a blow with her clenched hand on the chest. I fell head over heels purposely. With one bound she jumped over me and ran away, exhibiting a pair of legs such as — well: They talk of "Basque legs" — hers outshone them all. They were as quick as they were well turned! I got up immediately, but I managed to get my lance barwise across the alley, so my companions were prevented from starting in pursuit for a while. Then I set off running myself and my men after me, but there was no chance of our overtaking her, accoutred as we were with our spurs, our sabres, and lances! In less time than I take to tell you the incident, the prisoner had disappeared. Besides, all the gossips of the quarter assisted her flight and laughed at us, putting us also on the wrong scent. After much marching and countermarching it became necessary for us to return to the guard-house without the receipt from the governor of the prison!

My men, to escape punishment, said that Carmen and I had conversed in the Basque dialect, and that it did not seem quite natural, to tell the truth, that a blow from such a little girl would knock over a man of my weight. All this looked very suspicious for me — rather too clear, in fact. When I went down stairs again I was degraded and sent to prison for a month. This was my first punishment since I had enlisted. Farewell then to the stripes of quarter-master which I had already made sure of.

My first days in prison passed very sadly. When I became a soldier I had pictured to myself that I should at least reach the grade of officer.

Longa, Mina, my compatriots, are even "captains-general"; Chapalangarra, who is a negro and a refugee like Mina in your country, Chapalangarra was a colonel, and I have played tennis twenty times with his brother, who was a poor devil, like myself. Then, I said to myself, "All that time you served without punishment is now so much time lost. You have a black mark against you; to reinstate yourself in the opinion of your superiors you will have to work ten times harder than when you were a conscript. And for what have I been punished? For a chit of a gypsy who laughs at me, and who at this moment is at large in some corner of the town." Nevertheless I could not help thinking of her. Will you believe it, sir, those stockings full of holes, which she so liberally displayed when she made her escape, were always before my eyes. I looked out between the bars of my prison window, and amongst all the women who passed in the street I did not see one who was worth that little devil. And then, in spite of myself, I would clasp the flower which she had thrown at me, and which, dried though it was, still preserved its perfume. If there are witches this girl was one of them.

One day the gaoler entered and gave me a loaf of Alcala bread.

"Look here," he said, "see what your cousin has sent you."

I took the bread — very much surprised — for I had no cousin in Seville. It is a mistake perhaps, I thought, as I looked at the loaf, but it was so appetizing — it felt so fresh and good, that without troubling myself to find out whence it had come, or for whom it was intended, I determined to eat it. As I was cutting it my knife struck against something hard. I looked carefully and found a small English file, which had been slipped into the oven before the bread was baked. There was also in the loaf a piece of gold (two piastres). There was no longer room for doubt. The present came from Carmen. Liberty is everything with people of her race, and they would set fire to a town to avoid a day in prison. Besides the girl was shrewd, and with that loaf had befooled the gaolers. In an hour the thickest bar could be cut with the little file, and with the assistance of the two-piastre piece I could exchange my uniform for a civilian dress at the next clothes shop. You can imagine that a man who had many times gone birds-nesting for young eaglets over our cliffs would not be much put out to descend into the street from a window less than thirty feet from the ground. But I did not want to escape. I still preserved my honor as a soldier, and desertion seemed to me a great crime. But I was touched by this token of remembrance. When one is in prison one loves to think that one has a friend outside who is interested in one. The gold piece rather offended me. I would have liked very much to have sent it back, but where could I find my creditor? That did not appear a very easy task.

After having been degraded I did not think I had anything more to suffer, but there was a humiliation in store for me. That was when, on my release from prison, I was sent to duty and put on sentry like a common

soldier. You can scarcely imagine what a sensitive man feels on such an occasion as this. I believe I would rather have been shot. Then, at least, one marches along in front of the platoon; one feels of importance, every one is looking at you.

I was posted as sentry at the door of the colonel's house. He was a young man, rich, a "good fellow," who lived to amuse himself. All the young officers came thither and many citizens, women and actresses — so it was said. For my part, I felt as if every one in the city had agreed to meet there to stare at me. The colonel's carriage arrived, with his valet on the box. Whom did I see descend from it? *La Gitanilla!* She was decked out "as fine as fivepence," dressed up and bedizened, all gold and ribbons. A spangled dress, blue spangled shoes; flowers and trimmings all over her. She had a Basque tambourine in her hand. With her were two other gypsy women, one young and the other old. There is always an old woman to lead them. Then an old man with a guitar, also a gypsy, to play and make them dance. You know that people often amuse themselves by inviting gypsies to their parties and making them dance to the *romalis*, their characteristic dance; and often for other purposes.

Carmen recognized me, and we exchanged glances. I don't know why, but at that moment I wished myself a hundred feet underground.

"*Agur laguna* (good day, comrade). My officer, you are mounting guard like a raw recruit."

And ere I could find words to reply, she had entered the house.

All the guests were assembled in the *patio*, and, notwithstanding the crowd, I could see almost all that was passing through the railings. I could hear the castanets, the tambourine, the laughter and applause; sometimes I could perceive *her* head when she sprang up with her tambourine. Then I heard the officers address to her remarks which made the blood mount to my face, but what she said in reply I do not know. On that day, I think, I began to love her in earnest, for three or four times came into my head the notion to rush into the *patio* and stab those coxcombs who were flirting with her. My purgatory lasted a good hour; then the gypsies came out and the carriage rolled up to fetch them. Carmen, in passing, looked at me with those eyes of hers — you know them — and said to me in a low voice —

"Countryman, when one likes good fritters one goes to Triana, to Lillas Pastia's."

Lightly as a kid she sprang into the carriage, the coachman whipped his mules, and the joyous band drove off; I knew not whither.

You will guess that when I came off duty I went to Triana; but first I got shaved and brushed up, as if for a parade. She was at Lillas Pastia's. He was an old fruit-seller, a gypsy, as swarthy as a Moor, at whose establishment many of the townspeople came to eat fried fish, more particularly, I believe, since Carmen had taken up her quarters there.

"Lillas," she said, when she caught sight of me, "I will do nothing more to-day. To-morrow it will be day again. Come along, *pays;* let us have a stroll together."

She threw her mantilla over her face and we were in the street before I knew where I was going.

"Señorita," I said, "I believe I have to thank you for a present that you sent me when I was in prison. I have eaten the bread; the file served to sharpen my lance point, and I kept it in remembrance of you; but the money, here it is."

"Why, he has kept the money!" she exclaimed with a burst of laughter. "Well, so much the better, for at present I am not well in funds. But what matter? A wandering dog will not die of hunger. Come along, let us eat it all; you shall treat me."

We had taken the road to Seville. At the entrance of Serpent Street she purchased a dozen oranges, which she made me carry in my pocket-handkerchief. A little farther on she purchased some bread, sausage, and a bottle of Manzanilla. At length she entered a confectioner's shop. There she threw upon the counter the piece of gold which I had returned to her and another which she had in her own pocket, with some silver. At last she asked me for all I had, too. I had only some small change, which I handed to her, feeling very much ashamed that I had no more. I believe she would have carried off all the stock if she could. She chose the best and the dearest articles — *yemas* (yolks of eggs, sugared), *turm* (a kind of nougat), crystallized fruits — so long as the money lasted. I had to carry all these in paper bags. Perhaps you know Candilejo Street, where is a head of Don Pedro the Justiciary.

It ought to have "given me pause." We halted before an old house in this street. She entered the walk and rapped at the ground-floor. A gypsy, a true servant of Satan, opened the door to us. Carmen said something to her in Romany. The old woman grumbled at first, but to appease her Carmen gave her two oranges and a handful of bonbons; she also permitted her to taste the wine. Then she put her cloak on her, and led her to the door, which she secured with a bar of wood. As soon as we were alone Carmen began to dance as if she were possessed, singing "You are my *rom* and I am your *romi.*"

I was standing in the middle of the room burthened with all the packages, not knowing where to put them. She threw them all upon the floor and clasping me round the neck exclaimed "I pay my debts; I pay my debts — it is the law of the Cales."

Ah, sir — that day! that day! when I recall it I forget *to-morrow!*

(The brigand was silent for a while, then after he had relighted his cigar he continued: —)

We remained together the whole of the day, eating, drinking, and — and all the rest of it. When she had devoured the sweets, like a child of six

years old, she thrust her hands into the old woman's water-jar. "Now to make a *sorbet*," she said. She broke the *yemas* by dashing them against the wall — "so that the flies may leave us in peace," she remarked. There was no trick or folly that she did not perpetrate. I expressed a wish to see her dance, but where could we find castanets? She without hesitation took the old woman's only plate, smashed it in pieces, and then she danced the *romalis*, clattering the pieces of the plate as if they had been castanets of ebony or ivory. One would never feel bored with a girl like her — I can answer for that! Evening closed in, and I could hear the drums beating the "retreat."

"I must return to barracks," I said "for roll-call."

"To barracks!" she echoed in a contemptuous tone. "So you are a negro-slave and permit yourself to be driven with the whip! You are a regular canary in appearance and disposition. Go along with you! You have a chicken's heart!"

I stayed, resigned in advance to the police-cell. In the morning it was she who first spoke of our separation.

"Listen to me, Joseita," she said, "I have paid you, haven't I? According to our law I owed you nothing, since you are a *payllo;* but you are a good fellow, and you have pleased me. We are quits! Good-day."

I asked when I should see her again.

"When you are a little less stupid," she replied, laughing. Then in a more serious tone she continued, "Do you know, my friend, that I believe I love you a little bit? But that cannot last. Dog and wolf cannot keep house together long. Perhaps if you were to subscribe to the Egyptian law I should love to be your *romi*. But this is all nonsense — that cannot be. Bah! my lad, take my word for it, you have had the best of the bargain. You have foregathered with the devil; yes — with the devil! He is not always black, and he has not twisted your neck. I am dressed in wool, but I am not a sheep. Go and put a taper before your *majari*. She has well deserved it. Come; good-bye once again. Think no more of Carmencita or she may make you marry a widow with wooden legs."

As she ceased speaking she unfastened the bar which closed the door; and once in the street she wrapped herself in her mantilla, and showed me her heels.

She had said what was true. I would have been wise to have thought no more about her, but after that day in Candilejo Street I could not think of anything else. I walked about all day long in the hope of meeting her again. I inquired about her from the old woman and from the seller of fried fish. Both declared that she had gone to Laloro, as they call Portugal. Probably it was in accordance with Carmen's instructions that they said so, but it was not long before I discovered that they were lying. Some weeks after my long day in Candilejo Street I was put on sentry at one of the city gates. Some little distance from this gate a breach had been made

in the wall whereat people used to walk during the day, and where a sentry was posted at night to guard against smugglers. During the day I perceived Lillas Pastia lingering around the guard-house chatting with my comrades, all of whom were acquainted with him, his fish, and his fritters, which were better still. He approached me and inquired whether I had had any news of Carmen.

"No," I replied.

"Well, then, you soon will, comrade."

He was right. At night I was posted at the break in the wall. As soon as the corporal had disappeared I perceived a woman approach my post. My heart told me it was Carmen; nevertheless I said, "Be off, you cannot pass here!"

"Come, don't be obstreperous," she replied, as she made herself known to me.

"What! are *you* there, Carmen?"

"Yes, I, countryman; let us have a little conversation together. Do you want to earn a duoro? Some people with packs are coming this way — let them pass."

"No," I replied, "I must oppose their passage. Such are my orders."

"Orders, orders! You did not think of them in Candilejo Street."

"Ah!" I replied, quite upset by the very remembrance, "that was worth the danger of forgetting my duty; but I do not want any money from smugglers."

"Let me see, then. If you do not want any money from smugglers, what do you say to going to dine at old Dorothea's house again?"

"No," I replied, half-suffocated by the effort I was making, "I cannot."

"Very well; if you are so hard to move I know to whom to apply. I will make your officer the offer to go to Dorothea's house. He seems to be a good fellow, and he will put on guard a lad who will not see more than is necessary. Good-bye, canary. I shall laugh when the order is issued for your hanging!"

I was weak enough to call her back, and I promised to permit all the gypsies to pass, if it must be so, provided I obtained the recompense I wished for. She swore to meet me on the following day, and ran off to apprise her friends, who were close by. There were five of them, one being Pastia, and all heavily laden with English goods. Carmen kept watch. She agreed to give the alarm with her castanets whenever she should perceive the rounds, but she had no need to do so. The smugglers very quickly accomplished their business.

Next day I went to Candilejo Street. Carmen was waiting for me, but in a by no means good humor.

"I do not care for people who require to be begged of," she said. "You rendered me a great service the first time without any idea that you would gain anything by it. To-day you are bartering with me. I do not know

why I have come, for I don't care for you any longer. So go away; there is a duoro for your trouble!"

I was within an ace of throwing the money at her head, and was obliged to exercise a violent control over myself to avoid striking her. After we had argued for an hour I went away in a furious rage. I wandered for a long time about the city, hither and thither, like a man demented. At length I entered a church, and seating myself in the darkest corner I could find I gave way to tears. Suddenly I heard a voice say —

"A dragoon's tears! I should like to make a philtre of them!"

I looked up. There was Carmen standing before me!

"Well, countryman, are you still wishing for me? I really think I must love you still, for since you left me I have not known what to do with myself. There now, you see I am the supplicant, and want you to come to Candilejo Street."

We made it up then; but Carmen's humor was as variable as our climate. The storm is most likely to break when the sun is shining most brilliantly. She had promised to meet me once again at Dorothea's house, and she did not come, and Dorothea told me, in the calmest manner, that Carmen had gone to Laloro "on Egyptian affairs"!

Guided by experience I sought for Carmen in every place where I fancied she might be found, and I passed up and down Candilejo Street twenty times a day. One evening I was at Dorothea's house, for I had almost tamed the old woman by means of repeated glasses of anisette, when Carmen entered, followed by a young man, a lieutenant in my regiment.

"Get away at once," she said to me in the Basque tongue. I remained stupefied, rage boiling in my heart.

"What is that fellow doing here?" said the lieutenant. "Be off; get out of this!"

I could not move. I felt as if I had quite lost the use of my limbs. The officer seeing that I did not budge, and that I had not even removed my cap, took me by the collar and shook me violently. I do not know what I said. He drew his sword and I drew mine. The old woman seized my arm, and the lieutenant gave me a cut in the forehead, the scar of which remains to this day. I stepped back, and with a shove sent old Dorothea sprawling on the floor. Then, as the lieutenant followed me up, I gave him my point, and he spitted himself on my sword. Then Carmen extinguished the lamp and bade Dorothea to fly. As for myself, I rushed into the street and ran I knew not whither. It seemed to me that some one was following me. When I came to myself I found Carmen beside me. She had not left me.

"You great stupid canary," she said, "you are only good at committing follies. You see I was right when I told you I would only bring trouble upon you. Well, there is a remedy for every ill when one has a 'Fleming of Rome' for his friend. You must begin by tying this handkerchief over

your head, and giving me your sword belt. Wait for me in the alley, I will be back again in two minutes."

She disappeared and quickly returned, carrying a striped cloak for me; how she obtained it I cannot tell. She made me doff my uniform, and put the cloak on over my shirt. Thus accoutred, with the handkerchief over the cut on my head, I had something the appearance of a peasant of Valencia, of whom many come to Seville to sell their *chufas* — orangeade. Then she took me to a house, which bore a striking resemblance to Dorothea's, at the end of a narrow court. She and another gypsy woman washed me, doctored me better than the surgeon-major would have done, and gave me something — I know not what — to drink. At length they laid me on a mattress, and I fell fast asleep.

The women probably had put some soporific in my drink, for I did not awake until very late the next day. I had a fearful headache, and was rather feverish. It was some time before I could recall the incidents of the terrible drama in which I had taken part on the previous day.

After having dressed my wound, Carmen and her friend both crouched down beside my mattress, and exchanged a few words in *chipe calli,* which seemed to be a medical consultation. They both assured me that I would be cured before long; but, meanwhile, it was absolutely necessary to leave Seville, and as quickly as possible, for if I were arrested I would be shot, to a certainty.

"My lad," said Carmen, "you must do something; now that the king will give you neither rice nor salt cod, you must find some means of existence. You are too stupid to rob *a pastesas;* but you are lithe and strong. If you have courage enough go to the coast and be a contrabandist. Have I not promised to get you hanged? That is better than being shot. Besides, if you know how to look after yourself, you may live like a prince so long as the *minons* and the coast-guard do not catch you."

It was in this pleasing way that that devil of a girl indicated to me the new career for which she destined me — and to tell the truth it was the only one which lay open to me, now that I had rendered myself liable to the punishment of death. Need I confess to you, sir, that she brought me to the decision without much trouble! It seemed to me that we should be thrown into closer contact by this existence so full of risks, and so unlawful. Thenceforth, I believed myself sure of her affection. I had often heard of the contrabandists who traversed Andalusia well-mounted, blunderbuss in hand, and with their mistresses seated behind them. I already pictured myself trotting over the hills and vales with this handsome gypsy behind me. When I mentioned this to her she laughed until she was obliged to hold her sides, and told me that was nothing so pleasant as a night passed in the camp when each *rom* retired with his *romi* beneath the shelter of the little tent formed of three hoops with a blanket thrown over them.

"If I keep with you in the mountains, I shall always be sure of you," I said. "There there will be no lieutenants to share with me."

"Ah, you are jealous," she replied; "so much the worse for you. How can you be such a fool! Don't you see that I love you, since I have never asked you for any money?"

When she talked in this fashion I felt inclined to strangle her.

To cut the story short, sir, Carmen procured me a civilian dress, in which I escaped from Seville unrecognized. I proceeded to Jerez with a letter from Pastia to a seller of anisette, at whose house the smugglers used to assemble. I was presented to these gentry, whose chief, named Dancaire, received me into the company. We proceeded to Gaucin, where I again found Carmen, who had appointed to meet me there. In the expedition, she acted as a spy for us, and no one could have been a better one. She had returned from Gibraltar, and had arranged with the captain of a vessel concerning the disembarkation of the English merchandise which we expected to arrive at the coast. We went to await its arrival near Estepona; then we hid a portion of it in the mountains, and laden with the remainder proceeded to Ronda, whither Carmen had preceded us. Then she once more gave us the hint when to enter the town. This first expedition and some others were fortunate. The life of a smuggler pleased me more than that of a soldier. I made Carmen presents. I had money and a mistress. I suffered scarcely any remorse, for as the gypsies say — an itching of pleasure is no itch at all. We were well received everywhere; my associates treated me well, and even evinced some consideration for me. This was because I had killed a man, and amongst them there was no one who had not a similar exploit to boast of. But what influenced me more than all else in my new life was the frequent presence of Carmen. She displayed more friendship for me than formerly — nevertheless, before her comrades she did not pretend that she was my mistress, and had even made me swear with all kinds of oaths not to say a word to them on the subject. I was so utterly weak before this creature that I obeyed all her caprices. Besides, this was the first occasion on which she displayed any of the reserve of an "honest woman," and I was foolish enough to believe that she had abandoned all her former practices.

Our troop, which was composed of eight or ten men only, assembled together in important junctures, but were usually scattered in pairs or threes in the towns and villages. Each one of us assumed a calling or trade; one was a tinker, another a horse dealer. I was a pedlar. But I very seldom showed myself in the large towns, because of that little affair in Seville. One day, or rather one night, our rendezvous was below Vega. Dancaire and I found ourselves there before the others. He seemed in excellent spirits.

"We shall soon have another comrade," he said. "Carmen has executed one of her best moves. She has managed the escape of her *rom* from the *presidio* at Tarifa."

I was just beginning to understand the gypsy dialect, which nearly all my associates made use of, and the word *rom* gave me a chill.

"What, her husband! Is she married?" I asked.

"Yes," replied the captain, "to Garcia, the one-eyed, a gypsy as 'deep' as she is. The poor fellow was in penal servitude. Carmen got round the surgeon so cleverly that she obtained her *rom's* liberty. Ah! that girl is worth her weight in gold. It is two years since she first began to plan his escape. Nothing had succeeded until the officer was changed. With the latter it seems she quickly found the means to make herself understood."

You can imagine with what pleasure I listened to this news. I soon met Garcia the one-eyed; he was one of the most repulsive villains whom Bohemia ever reared, a dark skin and a still blacker soul. He was the most unmitigated ruffian that ever I met in my life. Carmen came with him, and when she called him her *rom* in my presence you should have seen the "eyes" she made to me, and the grimaces at him when his back was turned. I was very angry, and would not speak to her all the evening. In the morning we had made up our bales and were already on our way when we perceived that a dozen horsemen were after us. The Andalusian boasters, who always talk in the most bloodthirsty manner, showed a very firm front. There was a general stampede. Dancaire, Garcia, a fine young fellow from Edja called Remendado, and Carmen did not lose their presence of mind. The others abandoned the mules and threw themselves into the ravines, where the dragoons could not follow them. We could not save our mules, and we hastened to loose the most valuable portion of our booty and to take it on our shoulders. We then endeavored to escape over the rocks, and by the steepest and roughest slopes. We cast our bales before us, and followed them as well as we could, sliding down on our heels. All this time the enemy was firing at us. It was the first time that I had heard the whistling of bullets, and it did not make me feel quite at ease. When one has a wife in prospect there is no merit in risking death. We all escaped except poor Remendado, who got a bullet in his loins. I threw away my pack and endeavored to assist him.

"Fool!" exclaimed Garcia, "what have we to do with that carrion? Pick up your load, and don't lose the cotton stockings."

"Let him go," said Carmen to me.

Fatigue obliged me to lay the lad for a moment beneath the shelter of a rock. Garcia advanced and discharged his blunderbuss at his head.

"He will be a clever fellow who will recognize him now," he remarked, as he gazed at the features which a dozen bullets had shattered.

Such, sir, was the delightful kind of life I had embraced. In the evening we found ourselves in a thicket, and worn out with fatigue, having nothing to eat, and ruined by the loss of our mules. What did that infernal Garcia do? He took a pack of cards from his pocket and began to play with Dancaire by the light of the fire which had been kindled. Meanwhile I lay down and was watching the stars, thinking of Remendado and wishing I were in his place. Carmen was crouched near me, and from time to time

she rattled her castanets and hummed a tune. Then, approaching me, as if with the intention of whispering to me, she kissed me, almost against my will, two or three times.

"You are the devil," I said to her.

"Yes," she answered.

After some hours' rest she departed for Gaucin, and next morning a little goatherd brought us some bread. We remained all day in the same place, and at night we moved towards Gaucin. We waited for news of Carmen: none came. At daybreak we perceived a muleteer who was guiding a well-dressed woman holding a parasol, and accompanied by a little girl, who seemed to be her servant. Garcia said to us —

"There are two mules and two women which St. Nicholas has sent us. I would rather have had four mules. Never mind. This is my business."

He seized his blunderbuss and descended towards the path; hiding in the brushwood. Dancaire and I followed him at a little distance. When we were within range we showed ourselves, and called to the muleteer to halt. The woman instead of being frightened — and our dress was sufficient for that — burst out laughing.

"Ah, the *lillipendi*, they take me for an *erani!*" It was Carmen, but so well disguised that I would not have recognized her had she spoken in any other language.

She sprang from the mule and spoke for a while in a low tone with Garcia and Dancaire. Then she said to me:

"Canary, we shall meet again before you are hanged. I am going to Gibraltar on 'affairs of Egypt.' You will soon hear me talked about."

We parted after she had indicated to us a place where we could find shelter for some days. This girl was the saving of our troop. We soon received some money which she sent, and a hint, which was worth more to us, namely, that two British noblemen were about to proceed from Gibraltar to Granada by such a route. A word to the wise! They had plenty of money. Garcia wanted to kill them, but Dancaire and I were opposed to such a measure. We would relieve them of their money, their watches, and their shirts, of which last articles we had great need.

Sir, one may become a rogue without thinking about it. A pretty girl causes you to lose your head; you fight for her: a misfortune happens, it becomes necessary to dwell amid the mountains, and from a smuggler you become a robber before you are aware of the change. We concluded that it would not be well for us to remain in the environs of Gibraltar after that little business with the Englishmen, and we concealed ourselves in the Sierra de Ronda. You have mentioned José-Maria; well, it was there that I made his acquaintance. He brought his mistress with him on these expeditions. She was a pretty girl, well-behaved and modest, with good manners, never uttering an unbecoming word, and of a devotedness —! By way of compensation, he treated her very badly. He was always running

after other girls, he "bullied" her, then sometimes he took it into his head to be jealous. Once he struck her with his knife. Well, she only loved him the more for that. That is the way women, particularly Andalusians, are constituted! She was quite proud of the scar on her arm, and exhibited it as one of the most beautiful things in the world. And then José-Maria was the very worst comrade you could possibly meet. On one expedition which we undertook he managed so well that all the profit fell to him, and all the blows fell on us. But I must resume my story. As we heard nothing more of Carmen, Dancaire said:

"One of us must proceed to Gibraltar to get news of her; she ought to have prepared something. I would go willingly, but I am too well known there."

The one-eyed fellow said:

"So am I. I have played too many tricks upon the lobsters, and as I have only one eye, it is not easy to escape detection."

"Then I must go," I said in my turn, delighted at the very idea of seeing Carmen again. "Let us see; what must be done?"

The others replied:

"You can go to St. Roque whichever way you please, and when you have got to Gibraltar ask where a person, named Rollona, a seller of chocolate, lives; when you have found her out, you will find out what has happened yonder."

It was arranged that we three should start for the Sierra de Gaucin, that I should leave my companions there and proceed to Gibraltar as a fruit merchant. At Ronda one of our fraternity procured me a passport, at Gaucin I was given a donkey; I loaded him with oranges and melons, and went on my way. When I reached Gibraltar I found that Rollona was well known, but that she had either died or been sent to the galleys, and in my opinion her absence explained how our means of correspondence with Carmen had failed. I put my donkey up in a stable, and with my oranges wandered about town as if to sell them; but, in fact, to endeavor to find some face I knew. There are plenty of vagrants in "Gib," people from all parts of the globe, and it is like the tower of Babel, for one cannot go ten paces along a street without hearing as many different languages. I met many gypsies, but I scarcely dared to trust them. I recognized them and they recognized me. We ascertained that we were of the same class. After two days spent in useless search, I had learned nothing concerning either Rollona or Carmen, and I was considering whether I should not return to my comrades after making some purchases, when, as I was walking down a street at sunset, I heard a woman's voice from a window say, "Here, you orange-seller!" I looked up, and on a balcony I perceived Carmen leaning over the rail beside an officer in scarlet, with gold epaulets, curled hair, and the appearance generally of a grandee. As for her, she was dressed splendidly: a shawl over her shoulders, a gold comb in her hair,

attired in silk, and as cunning as ever — just the same, laughing immoderately. The Englishman, in barbarous Spanish, hailed me, and bade me come up, as madame wanted some oranges; and Carmen said to me in Basque, "Come up, and be astonished at nothing." Nothing could astonish me where she was concerned. I cannot tell whether I was the more glad or disappointed to see her again. A tall, powdered servant let me in, and ushered me into a splendid apartment. Carmen at once addressed me in Basque.

"Mind you do not understand a word of Spanish, and you do not know me."

Then, turning to the Englishman, she said, "I told you all along he was a Basque — you will hear a curious dialect. What a silly look he has, hasn't he? You would take him for a cat surprised in the larder!"

"And you," I replied in my own tongue, "have the air of a brazen-faced quean, and I am greatly disposed to gash your face before your lover."

"My lover!" she exclaimed. "So you have found out that all by yourself. And you are jealous of that fool? Why, you are a greater simpleton than you were before our evenings in Candilejo Street. Don't you see — fool that you are — that I am engaged upon affairs of Egypt, and in the most brilliant fashion? This house is mine; the lobster's guineas will be mine. I shall lead him by the nose, and bring him whence he shall never escape."

"And as for me," I replied, "if you conduct the affairs of Egypt any more in this manner I shall do something which will effectually prevent your beginning again."

"Ah, indeed! Are you my *rom* that you give me orders? The One-Eyed is satisfied. What have you seen here? Ought not you to be content to be the only one who can call himself my *minchorro?*"

"What does he say?" asked the Englishman.

"He says that he is thirsty, and could manage a good drink," replied Carmen. Then she fell back upon a sofa, screaming with laughter at the translation.

Sir, when that girl laughed there was no use in trying to talk sense. Every one laughed with her. The great Englishman laughed also, like the idiot he was, and bade his people bring me something to drink.

While I was drinking, Carmen said —

"Do you see that ring on his finger? If you like, I will give it to you."

But I answered —

"I would give a finger to have my lord on the mountain, each of us with a *maquila* in our hands."

"*Maquila?* What does he mean?" asked the Englishman.

"*Maquila!*" replied Carmen, still laughing. "*Maquila* is an orange. Is it not a queer term for an orange? He says he would like to make you eat an orange."

"Yes?" replied the Englishman. "Very well, bring more *maquilas* to-morrow."

As we were conversing, the servant announced dinner. Then the Englishman offered his arm to Carmen — as if she could not go in by herself, and threw me a pistole. Carmen, laughing all the time, said to me —

"My lad, I cannot invite you to dinner; but to-morrow, as soon as you hear the drums beating for parade, come here with your oranges. You will find a room better furnished than that in Candilejo Street, and you will see that I am always your Carmencita; and then we can chat over Egyptian affairs."

I made no reply, and I was in the street when the Englishman called out, "Bring the *maquilas* to-morrow." Then I heard Carmen's laughter once more.

I went away, not knowing whither or what I was doing. I scarcely slept, and the morning found me so incensed against the traitress that I resolved to quit Gibraltar without seeing her again. But at the first roll of the drums all my fortitude deserted me. I took my straw basket of oranges and hurried to Carmen. Her jealousy was aroused, and I saw her great eyes watching me. The powdered servant let me in. Carmen sent him on an errand, and as soon as we were alone she burst into one of her peals of crocodile laughter and threw herself on my neck. I had never seen her so lovely. Dressed like a bride, perfumed, surrounded with costly furniture and silken hangings — Ah! and I like the robber that I was!

"*Minchorro*," said Carmen, "I have a great mind to smash everything here, to set fire to the house and be off for the Sierra!"

Then her caresses, and her laughter! She danced and tore her dress; never did ape perform more gambols, make more grimaces or play more tricks. When she had regained her composure she said —

"Listen; it is a question of Egypt. I want him to take me to Ronda, where I have a sister — a nun. (More laughter.) We will pass by a place which I will tell you of. You can fall upon him and rob him. The better way will be to murder him; but," she added with a diabolical smile which she displayed at certain times, and no one would ever be inclined to imitate it — "do you know what you must do? Let the One-Eyed appear first. Keep a little in the rear yourself. The Lobster is brave and skilful; he has good pistols. Do you understand?"

She interrupted herself with another peal of laughter which made me shiver.

"No," I replied, "I detest Garcia, but he is my comrade. One day perhaps I will relieve you of him, but we will settle our accounts after the fashion of our country. I am only an Egyptian by chance, and in certain ways I shall always remain a pure *Navarro*, as the proverb says" (*Navarro fino*).

She replied, "You are a fool — an idiot — a regular *payllo*. You are

like the dwarf who believed himself big because he could spit a long distance. You do not love me — Go along with you!"

When she said "Go along!" I could not go. I promised to leave, to return with my comrades and lie in wait for the Englishman. On her side she promised to be indisposed until the time came for leaving Gibraltar for Ronda. I remained two days longer at Gibraltar. She had the audacity to come in disguise to see me at my inn. I quitted the town, for I also had my own project. I returned to our rendezvous, knowing the place and the hour at which the Englishman and Carmen would pass by. I found Dancaire and Garcia awaiting me. We passed the night in a wood by a fire of pine-cones, which burned splendidly. I proposed to Garcia to have a game of cards. He agreed. At the second game I declared he was cheating. He laughed. I threw the cards in his face. He went for his blunderbuss, but I put my foot upon it and said:—

"They tell me you can brandish a knife with any Jack of Malaga. Will you try a bout with me?"

Dancaire wanted to separate us. I had given Garcia a few blows with my fist. Rage had made him courageous. He had drawn his knife and I mine. We told Dancaire to stand aside and see fair play. He saw that it was no use attempting to stop us and he stood back. Garcia was already crouching like a cat about to spring upon a mouse. He held his hat in his left hand, as a guard, his knife advanced in his right. That is the Andalusian method. I stood like the Navarros, right in front of him, the left arm raised, the right leg advanced, the knife held down by the right thigh. I felt stronger than a giant. He threw himself upon me like a flash, I turned on my left foot and he found nothing before him, but I caught him in the throat and the knife entered so far that my hand came chock under his chin. I drew back the blade so forcibly that it broke. All was over! The blade was expelled from the wound in a rush of blood as big as my arm. He fell on his face like a log.

"What have you done?" said Dancaire.

"Listen," I said. "We could not have lived together. I love Carmen and I want to be the only one! Besides, Garcia was a brute, and I remember how he served poor Remendado. We are only two now, but we are good fellows. Look here; will you have me for a comrade — for life or death?"

Dancaire held out his hand. He was a man fifty years old.

"To the devil with your love affairs," he exclaimed. "If you had asked for Carmen he would have sold her to you for a piastre. We are only two now — what shall we do to-morrow?"

"Let me manage it," I replied. "Now I can snap my fingers at the whole world!"

We buried Garcia and pitched our camp two hundred paces further on. Next day Carmen and her Englishman passed with two muleteers and a servant. I said to Dancaire:—

"I will account for the Englishman. You can frighten the others; they are not armed."

The Englishman was a brave fellow. If Carmen had not jogged his arm he would have shot me. To be brief, I reconquered Carmen that day, and my first words were to tell her that she was a widow. When she understood how it came to pass, she said:—

"You will always be a *lilipendi*. Garcia ought to have killed you. Your Navarre guard is all nonsense, and he has conquered better men than you. His time had come, no doubt! Yours will come too!"

"And yours," I replied, "if you are not a true *romi* to me!"

"Well and good!" she replied. "I have seen in the coffee-grounds many a time that our destinies lie together. But he who sows reaps!" And she rattled her castanets as she was in the habit of doing when she wished to get rid of any unpleasant thoughts.

One is apt to forget others when speaking of oneself; all these details bore you no doubt, but I shall soon finish now. The life we lead will last long enough! Dancaire and I associated ourselves with some comrades more trustworthy than the former: we practised smuggling, and sometimes it must be confessed we stopped people on the highway, but only as a last resource and when we had no other means of livelihood. Besides we never ill-treated travellers and we confined ourselves strictly to taking their money.

For many months I was happy with Carmen; she continued to be useful to us in our operations and gave us notice of the good things we could "bring off." She stayed sometimes at Malaga, sometimes at Cordova, sometimes at Granada; but at a word from me she would leave any place and come to meet me in an isolated inn, or even in the camp. Once only, it was at Malaga, did she give me any uneasiness. I knew that she had thrown a glamor over a very rich merchant, with whom probably she proposed to repeat the little arrangement carried out at Gibraltar. Notwithstanding all Dancaire could say to me I went after her and got to Malaga in full daylight. I looked for Carmen, and brought her away immediately. We had some sharp words.

"Do you know," she said, "that since you have really become my *rom*, I care less for you than when you were my *fancy man*. I don't want to be worried and ordered about; what I wish is to be free and to do as I please. Take care — do not push me too far. If you trouble me too much I will find some fellow who will serve you as you served Garcia."

Dancaire reconciled us, but we said things to each other which rankled in our hearts and we were not on such good terms as formerly. A short time afterwards evil befel us. The troops surprised us. Dancaire was killed with two others of our band, two more were made prisoners. I was badly wounded, and without the aid of my trusty steed would have been left in the hands of the soldiers. Worn out by fatigue, with a bullet in my body,

I hid myself with only one companion in the forest. I fainted when I dismounted, and I thought I was going to die like a wounded hare in the brushwood. My comrade carried me to a grotto which we knew and then went to seek Carmen. She was at Granada and she came back at once. For fifteen days she never quitted me for a moment. She did not close her eyes; she nursed me with a skill and attention which no woman ever before displayed for a man she loved best. As soon as I could stand up again she carried me off to Granada in secrecy. The gypsies everywhere found us safe lodging, and I passed more than six weeks in a house two doors from the official who was searching for me. More than once from behind a shutter I saw him pass by. At length my health was restored, but I had thought a great deal while on my bed of sickness and I made up my mind to amend my life. I spoke to Carmen about leaving Spain and endeavoring to live honestly in America. She laughed at me.

"We are not fitted for cabbage growing," she replied; "our destiny is to live at the expense of the *payllos*. Look here, I have just arranged a little business with Nathan-ben-Joseph, of Gibraltar. He has a cargo of cotton stuffs which only want your assistance in passing through. He knows you are alive still. He reckons upon you. What shall we say to our correspondents in Gibraltar if you break your word to them?"

I permitted myself to be persuaded and resumed my villainous career.

While I was in hiding at Granada there was a bull-fight there to which Carmen went. When she came back she spoke of a very adroit *picador* named Lucas. She knew the name of his horse and how much his embroidered vest had cost. Inanito, the comrade who had remained with me, said some days afterwards that he had seen Carmen and Lucas at the house of a tradesman of Zacatin. That alarmed me. I asked Carmen how and why she had made the acquaintance of the *picador*.

"He is a man," she said, "with whom we can do some business. The river that makes a noise has either water or pebbles. He has won 1,200 reals at the bull-ring. One of two things must happen — we must have this money — or, as he is a good rider and a brave fellow, we must enrol him in our band. So-and-so are dead; you must replace them. Take him with you."

"I don't want either his money or himself," I replied, "and I forbid you to speak to him."

"Take care," she replied. "When people defy me to do a thing it is very soon done."

Fortunately the *picador* left for Malaga, and I set about smuggling in the Jew's cottons. I had a great deal to do in this expedition, and so had Carmen. I forgot Lucas; perhaps she also forgot him, for the time at any rate. It was about that time, sir, that I met with you first, near Montilla, then afterwards at Cordova. I will not say anything about our last interview. You perhaps know more about it than I. Carmen robbed you of

your watch; she also wanted your money, and particularly the ring you wear on your finger, which she said is a magic ring, which she was very anxious to possess. We had a violent quarrel; I struck her. She turned pale and cried. This was the first time I had ever seen her weep, and her tears had a great effect upon me. I begged her pardon, but she sulked all day; and when I departed for Montilla she did not want to kiss me. I was heavy-hearted when, three days afterwards, she came to see me, as gay as a lark. All was forgotten, and we passed two days in lover-like fashion. As we were again about to part she said: —

"There is a *festa* at Cordova; I am going to see it. Then I shall find out who has money, and will tell you."

I let her go. When alone I thought of the *festa*, and this change of humor in Carmen. She must have revenged herself already, I thought, since she had yielded first. A peasant told me that there was a bull-fight in Cordova. How my blood boiled, and, like a fool, I went there. He pointed out Lucas to me, and, in a seat near the barrier, I recognized Carmen. I had only to look at her for a moment to be fully assured of the fact I had suspected. Lucas played the bull "with a light heart," as I had anticipated. He snatched the cockade from the animal and carried it to Carmen, who placed it in her hair immediately. The bull tried to avenge me! Lucas was overthrown with his horse, and the bull fell upon both of them. I looked at Carmen; she was no longer in her place. It was quite impossible for me to get out, and I was compelled to wait until the courses were run. Then I went to the house which you know of, and there I remained quite quiet all the evening and a part of the night. Towards two o'clock in the morning Carmen returned, and was somewhat astonished to see me.

"Come with me," I said.

"Very well," she replied, "let us go."

I went to fetch my horse, and I put her *en croupe*. We rode all the remainder of the night without saying a single word to each other. We halted at daybreak at a solitary inn near a small hermitage. Then I said to Carmen: —

"Listen! I forget everything; I will speak of nothing that has passed. Only swear to me that you will follow me to America, and that you will remain quietly there."

"No," she replied in a sulky tone, "I won't go to America. I like being here best."

"Because you are near Lucas," I said. "But do not imagine, even if he recover, that he will ever make old bones. Yet after all, why should I trouble about him? I am tired of killing all your lovers; it is you whom I shall kill."

She gazed at me steadily with her wild eyes, and said: —

"I have always imagined that you would kill me. The first time I saw you I met a priest at the door of my house, and did you see nothing to-

night as we quitted Cordova? A hare crossed the road between your horse's feet. It is written!"

"Carmencita," I asked, "is it true that you no longer love me?"

She made no reply; she was seated cross-legged on a mat, tracing patterns with her finger on the floor.

"Let us change our mode of life, Carmen," I pleaded. "Let us go and live in some place where we shall never be separated. You know that we have a hundred and twenty onzas buried beneath a tree not far from here. Besides, we still have money in ben-Joseph's hands."

She smiled and replied: —

"I first, you afterwards. I knew that it would come to this."

"Reflect," I continued. "I have lost all patience with you; I am at the end of my tether! Make up your mind, and I will make up mine."

I left her and walked towards the hermitage. I found the hermit at prayer. I waited until his devotions were concluded. I wanted to pray, too, but I could not. When he rose I went up to him.

"Father," I said, "will you pray for one who is in great danger?"

"I pray for all the afflicted, my son."

"Can you pray for a soul which is about to appear before its Creator?"

"Yes," he replied, looking at me fixedly, and as there was something strange in my manner he wanted me to speak out.

"It seems to me that I have seen you before," he remarked.

I put a piastre on the bench. "When will you say mass?" I asked.

"In half an hour. The son of the inn-keeper, yonder, comes to serve it. Tell me, young man, have not you something on your conscience which is tormenting you? Will you hearken to the counsel of a Christian?"

I felt ready to cry. I said I would return, and then I got away. I lay down on the grass till I heard the bell. Then I rose and went near, but remained outside the chapel. When mass was said I returned to the inn. I almost hoped that Carmen had run away; she might have taken my horse and escaped. But I found her. She would never have it said that she was afraid of me. During my absence she had unpicked the hem of her dress, and taken out the lead. She was then sitting at the table, gazing into a bowl of water at the lead which had sunk to the bottom, and which she continued to throw in. She was so immersed in her occupation that she did not at first perceive me. Then she took a piece of the lead and turned it in all directions, with a sad expression in her face; sometimes she hummed one of the mystic songs in which gypsies invoked Marie Padilla, the mistress of Don Pedro, who was, they say, the Bari Crallisa, or great Queen of the Gypsies.

"Carmen," I said, "will you come with me?"

She rose, threw away her bowl, and put on her mantilla as if ready to go. They brought me my horse, she mounted behind me, and we departed.

"So, my Carmen," I said, after a while, "you really wish to follow me, is it not so?"

"I will follow you to death, yes; but I will not live with you any longer!"

We were in a solitary gorge; I pulled up.

"Is it here?" she said, as she sprang to the ground. She took off her mantilla, threw it at her feet and stood motionless, her hand upon her hip, looking straight at me.

"You are going to kill me, I see that quite well," she said. "It is fated; but you will never make me yield."

"I implore you, be reasonable," I said. "Listen to me; all the past is forgotten. Nevertheless, you know it, it is I who have lost myself; it was for your sake that I became a brigand and a murderer! Carmen, my Carmen, let me save you, and myself with you!"

"José," she replied, "you ask me to do what is impossible. I no longer love you; you love me still, and for that reason you want to kill me. I could very easily lie to you, but do not care to take the trouble. All is over between us. As my *rom* you have the right to kill your *romi*, but Carmen will always be free. Calli she was born, and Calli she will die!"

"So you love Lucas?" I said.

"Yes, I have loved him, like you, for a while; perhaps less than you. At present I love no one, and I hate myself for having loved you."

I threw myself at her feet; I took her hands in mine; I bedewed them with my tears; I recalled to her mind all the happy times we had had together. I offered to remain a brigand all my life to please her. I did everything, sir, everything. I offered her all, provided that she would still love me. But she said: —

"It is impossible to love you any longer, and I do not want to live with you!"

Fury took possession of me — I drew my knife; I wished she had displayed some fear and pleaded for mercy, but the woman was a demon.

"For the last time," I exclaimed, "will you remain with me?"

"No, no, no!" she replied, stamping her foot. Then she drew from her finger a ring that I had given her, and threw it amongst the bushes.

I stabbed her twice. It was Garcia's knife, which I had appropriated after breaking my own. She fell at the second thrust without a cry. I can still fancy I see her splendid black eyes regarding me steadily; then they became troubled, and closed. I remained insensible beside the body for a good hour. Then I remembered that Carmen had often said that she would like to be buried in a wood. I excavated a grave with my knife, and placed her in it. For a long time I searched for the ring, and at length found it. I placed it in the grave with her and also a small cross. Perhaps I was wrong! Then I mounted my horse, and galloped to Cordova, and at the first guard-house I made myself known. I said I had killed Carmen, but I did not wish to divulge where I had buried her. The hermit is a holy man. He has prayed for her. He has said a mass for her soul. Poor girl! It is the Calli who are to blame for having made her what she was.

ANDRÉ GIDE

(1869–)

André Gide was born in 1869. His progress as a writer has been, according to Mr. Gosse, very slow. He has "attempted many things: sentimental autobiography, poems; miscellaneous and extravagant tentatives, which were half prose, half poetry." He has also written plays, novels and essays. Among his most exquisite works are a series of short novels, of which *The Pastoral Symphony* is one of the finest.

The translation, by Thurston Macauley, used here, is from the edition published by the *Nouvelle Revue française*, Paris; copyright, 1921. The story appears here for the first time in English, by permission of the author and publisher.

THE PASTORAL SYMPHONY

February 10th, 189—

SNOW has been falling steadily for three days, blocking the roads. I have not been able to return to R —, where I have been accustomed to hold services twice a month for the past fifteen years. This morning but thirty worshippers were assembled in the chapel of La Brevine.

I shall take advantage of the leisure thus afforded me to look back and tell how I came to be interested in Gertrude. I intend to set down here everything which had to do with the formation and development of that pious soul, which I had brought out from darkness, it seems, only for adoration and love. Blessed is the Lord to have entrusted me with this task!

Two years and six months ago, as I was coming back from Chaux-de-Fond, a young girl who was unknown to me came in great haste to get me to go seven kilometers away, to a poor old woman who had died. The horse was not yet unharnessed; after taking a lantern, (I did not think I could get back again before dark) I made the child climb in the carriage.

I thought I was thoroughly familiar with all the neighboring country, but after passing the farm of Saudraie, the girl had me take a road I had never been on before. However, I did remember that as a young man I had gone skating on a mysterious little lake about two kilometers to the left. I had not been back there for fifteen years, for no pastoral duty took me out that way; I could not have told where it was, and, until now, had not given it a second thought, when suddenly, in the red and gold enchantment of the evening, I discovered again what I had first seen only in a dream.

The road follows the course of the water, until it breaks away at the edge of the forest, running into a peat-bog. I was certain I had not been there.

The sun was going down. For some time we drove in darkness, when at last my youthful guide pointed out, on the slope of a hill, a thatched cottage which scarcely seemed inhabited, save for a tiny wisp of smoke which stole out from it, blue in the shade, then yellow in the golden sky. I hitched the horse to a convenient apple-tree, then rejoined the girl in the humble abode where the old woman lay dead.

The gravity of the landscape, the silence and the solemnity of the hour chilled me. A woman who was still young was on her knees near the bed. The child, whom I had believed to be the daughter of the deceased, but who, it seems, was only her servant, lighted a smoky candle, then stood motionless at the foot of the bed. I had tried to talk to her during the long ride, but had been unable to get four words from her.

The woman who was kneeling got to her feet. She was not a relative, as I had thought at first, but merely a neighbor, a friend brought there by the servant when the old woman began to weaken, and who offered to watch by her bedside. She told me the woman had died without pain. Together we arranged for the burial and funeral service. As was customary in that forlorn district, it was left for me to decide everything. I was uncomfortable, I must allow, in leaving the hut, so poor in appearance, in the sole care of the neighbor and servant girl. Yet it scarcely seemed possible that there might be hidden wealth in any cranny of that wretched dwelling. . . . And what could I do? I asked, however, if the old woman had left any heir.

In reply the neighbor then took the candle, directing it towards a corner of the fireplace. Huddled on the hearth I could make out a vague being apparently asleep, the face almost completely hidden by a heavy mass of hair.

"Just that blind girl — the servant said she's her niece. That's all that's left of the family, it seems. She ought to be taken to an asylum, otherwise I don't know what might happen to her."

It was hard to settle her future existence; I was worried about the sorrow those brutal words might cause her.

"Don't wake her up," I said softly, trying to urge the neighbor at least to lower her voice.

"Oh, I don't think she's asleep! She's an idiot — can't talk or understand anything. I've been here since morning and she hasn't said one word or moved a step. I thought she was deaf at first, but the servant said she wasn't, but that the old woman, who was deaf herself never said a word to her, never opening her mouth at all, in fact, except to eat or drink."

"How old is she?"

"About fifteen or so, I'd guess. I don't know any more about her than you do."

I was scarcely inclined to take care of that poor, forsaken creature myself: but, after I prayed — or, rather, during my prayer — the neighbor and the servant both knelt at the head of the bed and, kneeling myself, it was suddenly made plain to me that God had placed this duty in my path, and that I could not avoid it. When I got to my feet I had made up my mind to take the child with me that very evening, though I had not the slightest idea what I could do with her afterwards, or in whose care I could place her. For a few moments I stood looking at the sleeping face of the old woman, whose mouth was wrinkled and drawn tight as a miser's purse from which nothing could escape. Then, going back go the blind girl, I told the neighbor of my intention.

"Better than leaving her here till to-morrow, when they come for the body," she said. And that was all.

Some things are done simply, without the fantastic obstacles men frequently delight in inventing. From earliest childhood we are often prevented from doing this thing or that which we would really like to do, simply because we hear it said about us: it can't be done. . . .

The blind girl let herself be taken away as though she were a lifeless lump. While her features were regular and fairly pretty, her face was utterly devoid of expression. I took a cover from the mattress on which she slept in a corner of the room, under the inner stairs that led up to the garret.

The neighbor seemed pleased and helped me bundle her up carefully, for the night was very clear and cold; and, after lighting the lantern on the carriage, I drove off, holding close against me this bundle of spiritless flesh which seemed alive only by the feeling of an indefinite warmth. All along the way I thought: is she asleep? And what gloomy sleep! . . . In what way was the old woman different from her sleep? Inhabitant of this opaque body, a soul waiting, no doubt, for some ray of your mercy, Lord! Grant that my love, perhaps, may free her from frightful gloom! . . .

I could not hide from myself the difficult welcome I would receive on my return home. My wife is a model of propriety; in those trying moments we experienced first I did not doubt, for an instant, the goodness of her heart, yet her charity does not relish being surprised. She is one used to going no further than is necessary, this side of her duty. Then, too, her charity is so regulated that love is a spent treasure. That is the only point to take issue with. . . .

"Now what have you burdened yourself with?"

Her first thought, when she saw me returning with the little girl, escaped in that cry.

As usual, when there had to be any explanation between us, I started to make the children, who had stood with open mouths, full of wonder and astonishment, go out. Ah, how different was this welcome from what I would have wished! Only my dear little Charlotte began to dance and clap

her hands when she understood something new, something alive, had come with me in the carriage. But the rest, of the same type as their mother, instantly grew cool and drew back from her.

There was a moment of great confusion. Neither my wife nor my children saw she was blind; consequently, they did not understand the special care I took to guide her steps. I was quite disturbed by the strange wailing the poor girl commenced when I dropped her hand, which I had held all during the journey. Her cries were scarcely human; one might almost think they were the plaintive yelpings of a puppy. Taken away for the first time from the narrow round of familiar sensations which formed her entire universe, her knees gave way beneath her; but, when I pushed a chair towards her, she fell down in terror, as one who did not know how to sit down. Then I took her to the fireplace, and, when she could crouch down in the position I had first seen her in the old woman's cottage, leaning against the grate, she recovered a little of her calm. In the carriage she had let herself slip to the floor, lying close to my feet during the entire ride. My wife, meanwhile, helped me, for the most natural action is invariably the best; but her reason incessantly struggled with her heart, often getting the better of it.

"What do you intend to do with her?" she asked, after the girl was settled.

My spirits sank as I remarked her unconcerned attitude and it was difficult to overcome a movement of indignation. Still lost in long and peaceful meditation, I turned towards the others who were waiting for what was next to come.

"I shall restore the lost sheep," I said, as solemnly as I could, with a hand on the forehead of the blind girl.

Amélie does not grant that one has to do anything unreasonable or contrary to reason, in teaching the Gospel. I could see she was about to protest, and I motioned to Jacques and Sarah, who were used to our little conjugal differences, and, moreover, little curious by nature (often insufficiently so to my liking) to take away the little ones. My wife still seemed abashed and rather put out by the intruder.

"You can talk in front of her," I said. "The poor child does not understand."

Then Amélie began to protest that assuredly she had nothing to say to me — she invariably began her longest discourses that way — and that she always had in everything to yield to my wishes, even though they might be utterly impractical and contrary to all precedents and common sense. I have already mentioned that I was by no means certain what I would do with this child. I had not considered the possibility, or if I had, only very vaguely, of installing her in our house, and I can almost say that it was Amélie who first suggested the idea to me, when she asked if I didn't think that we "had enough already in the house." Then she declared that

in the past she had never worried over the opposition of others, but that for her part she thought five children were enough, feeling, since the birth of Claude, (who, just at that moment, and as if he had heard his name, began to scream in his cradle,) that she had her "quota."

As she was talking, certain words of Christ rose from my heart to my lips, which, however, I curbed, for it always appeared unseemly to regulate my conduct behind the authority of the Holy Book. But when she pleaded fatigue I stopped crestfallen, for I saw that more than once the inconsiderate bursts of my zeal had weighed heavily upon my wife. While these recriminations showed me where my duty lay, I entreated her as tenderly as I could to consider that, if she were in my place, she would have done the same. She could not possibly have left in such dire distress a being that had no one to depend upon; I added that I was aware of the difficulty that caring for this infirm girl would add to the household burdens, and I regretted not being able to help any more than I did. Finally I appeased her somewhat, though my pleading brought down on the innocent girl a resentment she certainly did not deserve. I then made her see that Sarah would soon be old enough to be more helpful, and that Jacques no longer needed looking after. In short, God put in my mouth the words which helped her to accept that which, I assured myself, she would have accepted willingly, if she had had time to think it over, and if I had also not taken her so by surprise.

The project almost seemed won, and already my dear Amélie went kindly to Gertrude. Suddenly, however, her irritation returned, even stronger than before, when taking a lamp to look at the child she seemed as though she had found herself in a state of inexpressible filth.

"She's diseased!" she cried. "Brush yourself off! Brush yourself quickly! No, no! Not here! You'll cover everything with it! God help us! The children will be covered with it! There's nothing in the world I'm more afraid of than vermin!"

As a matter of fact the poor girl was covered with it: and I couldn't help thinking with a feeling of revulsion how I had her pressed close against me for so long a time in the carriage.

When I returned some minutes later, after brushing myself as thoroughly as I could, I found my wife fallen into a chair, her head in her hands, sobbing bitterly.

"I wouldn't have thought of having you undergo such a trial," I said to her tenderly, "but it was so late in the evening that it was hard to see clearly. I'll sit up to keep the fire going and the girl can sleep near it. Tomorrow we'll cut her hair and wash her properly. You'll begin looking after her and all this horror will pass away. And please don't say a word about this to the children!"

It was time for supper. My protégée, whom old Rosalie, our only servant, regarded with hostility, greedily devoured the plate of soup I gave

her. The meal passed in silence. I should have liked to tell of my experience, to talk to the children, stir them and make them feel and understand the strangeness of such a sad state of destitution, arouse their pity and sympathy for the one whom God had bidden us succor; but I was afraid of reviving Amélie's irritation. It seemed an order had been given to forget the occurrence, yet we could think of nothing else.

I was deeply moved when more than an hour later, after all were in bed and Amélie had left me alone, I saw my little Charlotte open the door, and enter softly in her nightgown and bare feet. She came to me and held her little arms tight about me.

"I did not say good-night properly," she murmured.

She pointed with the end of her tiny forefinger to the blind girl who slept so innocently, and whom she had been eager to see again before she went to sleep.

"Why can't I kiss her?" she asked, very softly.

"You can kiss her to-morrow. Let her alone for the present — she's asleep," I said, as I took her back to the door.

Then I sat down and worked until morning, reading and preparing my next sermon.

Certainly, I thought (I remember) Charlotte is more affectionate to-day than the older children; but each of them, at her age, was the same — even my big Jacques, now so distant and reserved. . . . They seem to be loving, but they are only coaxers and teasers.

February 27th.

The snow is still falling heavily to-night. The children are delighted because, they said, one has to go through the windows to get out. The fact is that to-day the door is blocked and one can only leave the house through the laundry. Yesterday I was assured that the village had provisions in abundance, for we are, without doubt, to be isolated from the rest of the world for some time. It is not the first winter we have been blockaded by snow, but I never remember having seen it wall us in so thickly. I shall profit by it to continue the narrative I have here begun.

I said that I did not ask, when I brought the blind girl back with me, what place she could occupy in the house. I knew something of my wife's obstinacy; then I knew the room we could make use of and our resources were both very limited. I was influenced, as always, as much by natural inclination as by principles, without endeavoring to think of the expense my outburst might result in. It is another thing to have to rely upon God or to rest the burden on another. It seemed plain to me I had laid a heavy burden on Amélie's shoulders, so heavy that at first I was surprised.

I helped as much as I could in the cutting of the girl's hair, which I could see she did with some disgust. The washing and cleaning my wife had to do all by herself; and I realized I had escaped the heaviest and most unpleasant tasks.

Amélie, in other respects, did not make the least protestation. It seemed she had thought things over during the night and assumed her share of this new burden; she even appeared to take some pleasure in it, and I saw her smile when she had finished dressing Gertrude. A white hat covered the shorn head on which I had put some pomade; some of Sarah's old clothes and clean linen replaced the filthy rags Amélie had thrown into the fire. The name of Gertrude was chosen by Charlotte and accepted by us all immediately, since we didn't know her real name, and there was no way of learning it. She must have been a little younger than Sarah, whose last year's clothes just fitted her.

I must here confess the profound deception which I felt darken the first days. Certainly I was making a romance out of Gertrude's education, while the reality depressed me considerably. Her indifferent expression, the dullness of her face, especially her utter impassiveness, chilled the very source of my good-will. All day long she stayed close to the fire, on the defensive, and when she heard our voices, especially when anyone approached her, her features seemed to harden; they did not lose their inexpressiveness even to show hostility if one only tried to attract her attention, she began to whine and snarl like an animal. This sulkiness stopped only when it was time for her meals, which I served her myself and which she attacked with a bestial greediness most revolting to watch. And just as love responds to love, so a feeling of distinct aversion overcame me, before that obstinate, self-willed creature. Truly, I must own that during those first ten days I had begun to despair and even lost interest in her to the point that I lamented my first zeal and almost wished I had never brought her back with me. I was somewhat piqued, too, because Amélie, from whom I was unable to hide these feelings, was more lavish in her solicitude, it seemed, since she felt Gertrude had become a burden to me and that I was mortified by her presence among us.

In such frame of mind was I when my friend Doctor Martins, of Val Travers, came to see me in the course of his visits. He was quite interested in what I told him about Gertrude's condition, and greatly astonished at first that she had remained in that backward state; but I explained to him that her infirmity was due to the deafness of the old woman, who was the only person, until then, who had taken care of her, and who never spoke to her, so that the poor child was brought up in utter neglect. He told me I was wrong to despair; but I was not so sure.

"You want to start building," he told me, "before being sure the ground is solid. Remember, everything in her mind is in a state of chaos, and that even the barest outlines are not yet secured. The question is, in starting, to fasten together some tactile and gustatory sensations and secure them like a label, a sound, a word, repeated to her sufficiently, then try to have her say them after you.

"Above all do not try to progress too quickly; occupy yourself with her at regular hours, and never very long at a time. . . .

"Besides, this method," he went on, after explaining it in considerable detail, "has nothing magic about it. I didn't invent it and others have already made use of it. You remember, don't you? At the time we were considering Condillac and his living statue, we discussed an analogous case. . . . At least," he said, after a pause, "I read about it afterwards in a psychological review. . . . But, that doesn't matter; I was impressed by it, and I even remember the name of that poor child, more abandoned than Gertrude, for she was blind and deaf and dumb, treated by a doctor from a part of England I can't recall, towards the middle of the last century. Her name was Laura Bridgeman. This doctor kept an account — as you should — of the progress of the child, or at least at the beginning, of his efforts in teaching her. For days and weeks he kept making her touch and feel alternately two little objects, a pin, then a pen, then feel on a page printed for the blind the relief of two English words: pin and pen. And during those weeks he obtained no result. The body seemed uninhabited. However, he did not lose confidence. It made me think," he related, "of leaning over the brink of a deep, black well and desperately moving a rope in the hope that finally a hand might seize it. For, he did not doubt one instant but that there was someone down there, at the bottom of the abyss, and that the rope would eventually be seized. And, at last, one day a sort of smile brightened the impassive face of Laura; I am sure at that moment tears of love and gratitude must have fallen from his eyes, as he sank on his knees to thank the Lord. Laura suddenly came to understand what the doctor wanted her to; she was freed! From that day on she was attentive; her progress was rapid; she soon even began to instruct herself, and later became the directress of an institution for the blind — at least, that can happen to another. . . . for other cases presented themselves recently, which have been discussed at great length in reviews and newspapers; a great surprise to many — and rather foolishly so to my thinking — that such creatures could be happy. For it is a fact: each of these walled-in souls was happy, and as soon as they could express themselves they told of their happiness. Naturally, writers go into ecstasies in being given proof for themselves who, 'enjoying' their five senses, yet have the effrontery to complain."

Here Martins and I became involved in an argument in which I revolted against his pessimism. It did not seem reasonable. It resulted in calculations that made us grieve.

"That's not the way I understand it," he protested. "I just want to tell you that the soul of man can much more easily imagine beauty, joy and harmony, than debauchery and sin, which tarnish, degrade and revile this world. Learning this helps to contribute to our five senses. Thus, I can willingly follow the *Fortunatos nimium* of Virgil, from *si sua mala nescient* to the *si sua bona norint*, which teaches us: how happy are they that are ignorant of evil."

Then he told me of a story by Dickens, which he thought had been directly inspired by the case of Laura Bridgeman, and which he promised to send me immediately. Four days later I received *The Cricket on the Hearth*, which I read with keen delight. It is a tale, a trifle long, but with moments of pathos, of a young blind girl whose father, a poor toy-maker, keeps her in an illusion of luxury, riches and good fortune; deceit that Dickens' art strives to pass for piety. Thank God! I shall not have to do that with Gertrude!

The day after Martins had come to see me, I began to put his method into practise, applying it as well as I could. Now I regret I didn't take notes as he advised, of Gertrude's first steps along this shadowy road, where even I was unable to guide her gropings at first. In those early weeks I had to be more patient than one could imagine, not only because of the time this first demanded, but also because of the reproaches I incurred thereby. It is hard for me to have to say that these reproaches came from Amélie; and, moreover, if I speak of them here, it is not with any feeling of animosity or bitterness — I declare positively she shall read these pages. (Doesn't Christ show us through the parable of the lost sheep that our sins are forgiven?) I would say more: just at the moment her reproaches hurt me most I couldn't blame her for disapproving of the long hours I gave to Gertrude. That I didn't reproach her was rather because I was not certain that my efforts would be successful. Yes, it was the lack of eagerness that made me suffer, without discouraging me from going on. How often I heard repeated: "If you could only accomplish something . . . ," for she was thoroughly convinced that my labor was in vain; naturally, it did not seem right for me to give to this undertaking time which she always maintained could be employed far better otherwise. Whenever I was busy with Gertrude she would attempt to show me that I had not the least inkling of the outcome, and that I was wasting on her time I should be devoting to other things. Finally, I think she was moved by a sort of maternal jealousy, for I heard her say more than once: "You never bothered yourself as much with any of your own children." That was true, for while I loved my children devotedly, I never felt I had to concern myself greatly about them.

I've often felt that the parable of the lost sheep was one of the hardest of acceptance by certain persons who, in spite of it, believe themselves thoroughly Christian. That each lamb of the flock, taken apart, was in the eyes of the shepherd as precious as the whole flock, they could never understand. And those words: "If a man have an hundred sheep and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the other ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" Those words, charitable if sincerely interpreted, they denounce with the most revolting injustice.

The first smiles of Gertrude completely consoled me and repaid me a

hundred-fold for my pains. For "if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray." Yes, verily I say, never did a smile from any of my children fill my heart with such heavenly joy as did that which appeared on that face of stone one morning, when she seemed to begin crudely to understand what I had tried to teach her for so many days.

The fifth of March. I have noted the date as that of a birth. It was less a smile than a transfiguration. All of a sudden her features became animated; it was like a sudden light, like that purple glow in the high Alps which, just before dawn, sets the snow-crowned peaks in motion, denoting the passing of night; one might call it a mystical coloration; it seemed to me like the piscina of Bethesda at the moment the spirit came down to stir the dormant water. The angelic expression that Gertrude assumed held me enraptured, for it seemed a sign of great love and understanding coming into her life. Such a wave of gratitude swept over me that it seemed I offered up to God the kiss I placed on that beautiful forehead.

The progress now was as rapid as the first result had been difficult to obtain. I am trying to recall to-day by what ways we proceeded; at times it seemed that Gertrude advanced by bounds, as if to mock all methods. I remember at first I insisted on the characteristics of objects, rather than on their variety: warmth, cold, indifference, sweetness, bitterness, roughness, flexibility, buoyancy. . . . then movements: walking, approaching, rising, crossing, lying down, tying, scattering, gathering, etc. . . . And soon, abandoning all method, I could converse with her without wondering as to whether her mind were always following me; slowly urging and provoking her to question me. Certainly much had been accomplished in her mind during the time I had given up to her; for every time I saw her it was with some new surprise. I felt separated from her only by a thin wall of darkness. It was like the mildness of the air and the insistence of spring gradually triumphing over winter, I told myself. Often have I admired the way the snow falls: one might say that it wears itself out underneath, while its surface remains the same. Each winter it amazes Amélie; she tells me the snow never changes; you think it is still thick, when it suddenly gives way, and all at once life is allowed to go on as before.

I was afraid that staying so near the fire constantly might weaken Gertrude, so I tried to get her to go out. She consented, however, to go walking only when her arm was linked with mine. The first surprise and fear that seized her on going out of the house made me realize that she had never before ventured out of doors. In that cottage where I had found her no one had bothered about her, except to give her something to eat and help her to die; I can hardly say that she lived. Her gloomy universe had been bounded by the same walls of that solitary room she had never left; on summer days she went to the threshold, when the door was open

on the wide, brilliant world. She told me later on, that hearing the singing of the birds had brought to her mind a clear vision of light which seemed to caress her cheeks and hands; and that, without stopping to think particularly about it, it seemed as natural that the warm air should begin to sing as that the water on the fire should start boiling. It did not disturb her, for she scarcely paid attention to anything, living in a deep torpor until that day when I began to take an interest in her. I remember her inexhaustible delight when I told her those little voices came from living creatures, for it seemed their sole function in expressing themselves was in spreading the joy of nature. (From that day she began to say: 'I am as happy as a bird!') Nevertheless, the thought that those melodies sang of the beauty of sights she could never see began to make her sad.

"Is it true," she asked, "that the earth is as beautiful as the birds say? Why doesn't one talk more about it, then? Why don't you tell me about it? Are you afraid to hurt me, making me think I can't see it? You're wrong — I listen as well as the birds and I believe I understand all they're saying."

"Those who can see can't hear as well as you, my Gertrude," I said, hoping to console her.

"Why don't the other animals sing?" she asked. Occasionally her questions took me by surprise, and for a moment I would be perplexed, for she forced me to think about things I had until then accepted without wondering about. Thus, I thought for the first time how the more an animal is secured to the earth, the heavier and sadder he is. I tried to make her understand this; I told her of the squirrel and his fun.

She then asked me if birds were the only creatures that flew.

"Butterflies do, too," I replied.

"Do they sing?"

"They have another way of expressing their happiness," I told her. "It is written in colors on their wings." . . . And I described the gaily-colored patterns of their wings.

February 28th.

I shall go back, for yesterday I let myself be swept along.

To teach Gertrude I had to learn the alphabet of the blind myself; but soon she became more proficient than I in reading that writing, which I had trouble enough in learning myself, and which, besides, I followed more easily with my eyes than with my hands. Moreover, I was not the only one who helped teach her. At first, I was glad to be assisted in this care, for I had to make visits to the poor and sick of the parish, where the houses are widely scattered, so I frequently had to go some distance away. Jacques had broken his arm during the Christmas vacation he had just passed with us; meanwhile he had returned from Lausanne where he had already completed his first terms of study and entered the theological school. The fracture was not serious: Martins, whom I have already men-

tioned, took care of it without the help of a surgeon; but the treatments kept Jacques at home for some time. He began to take a sudden interest in Gertrude; until then he had not noticed her. He helped me teach her to read. This assistance lasted only during the time of his convalescence, about three weeks, but during this time Gertrude made considerable progress. An extraordinary zeal stimulated her then. While her intelligence was dull the day before, it seemed that after her first steps, and almost before she knew how to walk, she began to run. I wondered that her difficulty in formulating thoughts was so slight, and how soon she began to express herself well, not childishly, but correctly, helping herself to conceive the thought in the most unexpected and happiest way for us, things we taught her to recognize, or which we spoke of and described to her, when we could not make her comprehend clearly; we always used what she could touch or feel to explain things that were not within their reach, in the manner of surveyors taking measurements some distance away.

But I believe it is unnecessary to note here all the first steps of this instruction, which, doubtless, can be found in the teaching of all blind people. I felt that every teacher of the blind must have been plunged in the same difficulty in the matter of colors. (And in this connection I am moved to remark that nowhere in the Gospels is there any reference to colors.) I don't know what others have done, but for my part I started by naming the colors of the prism as they are revealed in the rainbow; this immediately created a confusion between color and light; I realized her imagination had not come to make any distinction between the quality of shade and that which the painters call, I believe, values. She made the serious mistake of assuming that each color could be more or less deepened, and that they could be mixed together indefinitely. Nothing puzzled her more, and she went over it endlessly.

Meanwhile I decided to take her to Neuchâtel to hear a concert. The rôle each instrument played in the symphony permitted me to bring up the question of colors again. I told Gertrude of the difference in sound of brass, string and wood instruments, and that each of them in its way was capable of making, with more or less intensity, an entire scale of sounds, from very low ones up to very shrill ones. I had her represent in her mind red and orange colors as analogous to the sounds of horns and trombones; yellow and green to those of violins, violincellos and bass viols; violet and blue, the flutes, clarinets and oboes. From that time a sort of inner rapture replaced her questioning.

"How beautiful that must be!" she said again and again, then, suddenly: "But white? I don't understand what represents white . . ."

Immediately it was apparent how precarious my comparison had been.

"White," I tried to tell her, however, "is the very shrillest, when all the tones are blended, just as black is the deepest." — But that didn't satisfy me any more than it did her, for I noticed at once that the wood

winds and brass instruments and violins were different from each other in the deepest as well as in the shrillest notes. Then I became silent and perplexed, trying to discover some possible comparison.

"Well," I said, finally, "imagine something entirely pure, something which has no color in it — only light; that would be white. Black, on the other hand, is so clouded with color that everything is obscured. . . ."

I recall here traces of this conversation as an example of the sort of difficulties I frequently encountered. There was much that Gertrude didn't understand, as is often the case with people who fill their minds with imperfect or false thoughts, which soon corrupts all reasoning power. As long as she had an obscure idea in it, each thought caused her anxiety and uneasiness.

For I have said that the greatest difficulty in her mind was the notion that light and color were intimately connected, so that it was extremely difficult to dissociate them afterwards.

Thus, I experimented incessantly to show her how the visual world differed from the world of sound, and to such a point that any comparison I tried to make between them was imperfect.

29th.

I have been so occupied with these comparisons that I haven't yet told how much Gertrude enjoyed the concert at Neuchâtel. They played as a matter of fact the *Pastoral Symphony*. I say "as a matter of fact," for it was, one can readily understand, the work above all others I would have chosen for her to hear. For some time after we left the concert hall Gertrude was silent, as though carried away in a trance.

"Is it true that what you see is as beautiful as that?" she asked, finally.

"As beautiful as what, my dear?"

"As that *Scene by the Brookside?*"

I didn't reply at once, for I reflected that those harmonies portrayed so inexpressibly, not the world as it actually was, but far better than it could ever be, without evil or sin. Never yet had I attempted to talk to Gertrude of evil, sin or death.

"Those who have eyes," I said, "don't realize their good fortune."

"But I don't have them," she cried, "yet I realize the good fortune of hearing."

"Pastor, do you know how happy I am?" she asked, hanging on to my arm like a child as we walked. "No, no, I'm not saying that just to please you! Look at me: don't you see it in my face, even if they say it isn't true? I know it so well by the sound. You remember the day you told me you didn't weep, after my aunt (it was thus she referred to my wife) reproached you for not doing anything for her? I cried to myself: 'Pastor, you're not telling the truth!' Oh, I could tell at once from your voice that you weren't telling the truth! I didn't have to feel your cheeks to know

you had been weeping." And she repeated very loud: "No, I didn't have to feel your cheeks —" That made me blush, for we were still in the town and the passers-by turned round.

"You don't have to try to make me believe it, you see," she continued. "First, because it would be very mean to try to deceive a blind person. . . . And then, because I wouldn't believe it," she added, cheerfully. "Tell me, pastor, you're not unhappy, are you?"

I put her hand to my lips, as if to make her feel without confessing it that she was the reason for my happiness.

"No, Gertrude," I replied at once. "I'm not unhappy. Why should I be unhappy?"

"You weep sometimes, though?"

"Sometimes."

"Since the time I spoke of?"

"No, not since then."

"And you haven't felt like weeping?"

"No, Gertrude."

"Tell me — you wouldn't lie to me?"

"No, dear child."

"Then promise never to try to deceive me."

"I promise."

"Good! Now, tell me — am I pretty?"

This unexpected question disconcerted me, especially because I had not wished until then to call attention to her undeniable beauty; I felt it was perfectly unnecessary, moreover, that she herself should be made aware of it.

"What does it matter to you to know that?" I asked at once.

"I'm anxious about it," she replied. "I want to know if I . . . how do you say it? . . . if I am too much out of tune in the symphony. Of whom else could I ask that, pastor?"

"A clergyman is not concerned with beauty of faces," I said, defending myself as best I could.

"Why?"

"Because beauty of soul is sufficient."

"You prefer to let me believe that I'm ugly," she said, with a charming pout. I was unable to hold out any longer.

"Gertrude!" I exclaimed, "you know you are beautiful!"

Her face assumed a very serious expression which did not go away until we returned.

As soon as we got back, Amélie found a way to make me feel she disapproved of the trip. She had wanted to speak of it before, but she had let us leave without saying a word to either of us, as was her custom, reserving the right to blame us afterwards. While she did not exactly

reproach me, her silence itself was accusing. Wasn't it natural that she should have asked what we heard, since she knew I had taken Gertrude to a concert? Nor did it add to Gertrude's happiness to feel she didn't take the least interest in her pleasure. Amélie, however, did not remain silent, but seemed to make a point of talking only of the most inconsequential things. That evening after the children had gone to bed I drew her aside.

"Are you angry because I took Gertrude to the concert?" I asked her sternly.

"You do things for her you'd never do for any of your own family," was her reply.

Her complaint was always the same, just as she always refused to understand that one fêted the prodigal son, not those who stayed at home, as the parable tells; it also hurt me to see her take no account of Gertrude's infirmity, for what other holidays could the poor girl hope for? Amélie's reproach was especially unjust, since I had happened to have some free time that day, and also since she knew each of my children either had work to do or something which kept them at home. Amélie herself had no taste for music whatsoever, so that even when she did have any time at her disposal the idea of going to a concert would never occur to her.

I was even more displeased by Amélie daring to say that before Gertrude: for while I had carefully taken my wife aside, she had raised her voice loud enough for Gertrude to hear. I was more indignant than sad, and some moments later, when Amélie had left us, I went to Gertrude, taking her weak little hand and putting it to my face.

"You see," I said, "this time I did not weep."

"No, this is my turn," she replied, smiling with an effort. Her beautiful face, raised to mine, was suddenly covered with tears.

March 8th

The only way I could please Amélie was by not doing things that displeased her. These completely negative tokens of love are all she allows me. She herself could not know to what an extent she had narrowed my life. Ah, would to God she might ask me to do some difficult feat for her! With what relish would I accomplish the rash and perilous thing! One might say that everything to which she was not accustomed was distasteful to her: the course of her life was merely an adding together of the days that pass. She wants no new virtues, nor would she even accept them from me. Any effort of the spirit which sees in Christianity more than merely domestic instincts is regarded by her with uneasiness, if not reproachfully.

I should confess I had forgotten entirely, when I went to Neutchâtel one time, to settle an account with our merchant, to bring her back some thread she had asked me to. Afterwards I was much angrier with myself than she seemed to be, especially since I had promised faithfully not to

forget it, knowing that "those who are faithful in little things will be so in big ones," and I was afraid of the conclusions she might draw from my lapse of memory. I wished she had reproached me for it; certainly in this case I deserved it. But, as it always happened, there was but the imaginary complaint which implied: how perfect life would be if we were satisfied with our actual difficulties, without bothering with the phantoms and monsters of the mind. . . . But I am letting myself go on about something which might better make the subject of a sermon. I have undertaken to set down the account of Gertrude's moral and intellectual development, and I will return to it.

I should like to be able to follow her development step by step. I began by telling it in some detail. But since I have not had time to note down minutely its various phases, to-day it is extremely difficult for me to connect exactly the sequence of events. Swept along by my narrative, I have written first of Gertrude's thoughts and my most recent conversations with her. Some may be astonished at reading how she expressed herself so soon with such accuracy, and reasoned so judiciously. I might say her progress was made with truly amazing rapidity: I often admired the promptitude with which her mind seized the intellectual nourishment I gave her and how much she mastered by the process of assimilation and continual ripening. She surprised me in anticipating my thoughts and even passing them, so that often I failed to recognize my pupil in a conversation with her.

At the end of a few months it seemed scarcely credible that her intellect had lain so long dormant. Already she gave evidence of more wisdom than most young girls, whom the outer world dissipated and who gave most of their time to futile preoccupations. Besides, I believe she was older than we had at first thought her. It seemed she made the best possible use of her blindness, causing me to wonder if, in most ways, that infirmity was not an advantage to her. In spite of myself, I would compare her to Charlotte, whose mind was distracted by the least little thing, and I would think: "All the same, how much better she listens to me, even if she can't see!"

It goes without saying that Gertrude was very fond of reading; but I was anxious to follow her thought as much as possible, so I preferred that she didn't read much at least without me — and principally the Bible. I shall tell now, however, of something bearing on music which took place, as I remember it, but a short time after the concert at Neuchâtel.

That concert had been, I believe, three weeks before the summer vacation that brought Jacques back home. Meanwhile, more than once I had seated Gertrude in front of the little harmonium in our chapel, where Mademoiselle de la M—, with whom Gertrude is now living, usually sat. Louise de la M— had not yet begun to give Gertrude music lessons. In spite of my great love for music, I know nothing about it at all and

scarcely felt capable of showing her anything when I sat down before the keyboard, near her.

"No, let me," she said, "feel my way from the start. I'd rather try it by myself."

I left her willingly, because the chapel seemed hardly a proper place to be alone with her, as much out of respect for that holy place, as for fear of gossip. When a round of visits would call me away, I took her to the church and left her there, for hours at a time, until I returned to take her back home. She occupied herself in improvising, and I would find her again, towards evening, plunged in an ecstasy over some harmony.

Early in August, only a little more than six months later, I had been to console a poor old woman. I returned to take Gertrude home from the church where I had left her. She didn't expect me so soon and I was quite surprised to find Jacques with her. Neither of them heard me enter, for the little sound I made was drowned by the organ music. It is not in my nature to spy, but I was deeply concerned over everything that had to do with Gertrude: I climbed as stealthily as I could up the stairs that lead to the gallery — an excellent observation post. I should say that all the time I stayed there I didn't hear a word from either of them which couldn't also have been said before me. But he was close to her, and several times I saw him take her hand to guide her fingers on the keys. Wasn't it strange she should have already accepted that help from him, when she had told me before that she preferred to be by herself? I was more astonished and hurt than I would have cared to admit, and I had already decided to intervene, when suddenly Jacques looked at his watch.

"It's time for me to go now," he said. "Father will be here soon to take you back."

Then I saw him raise the hand she held out to him to his lips, and he left. Some moments later, having quietly come down the stairs, I opened the door of the church so she might think I had just entered.

"Well, Gertrude! Ready to go back? How is the music?"

"Splendid," she said, in a most natural voice. "To-day I have really made some progress."

A deep sadness filled my heart. No one, however, made any allusion to what I have just written about.

I longed to be alone with Jacques. My wife, Gertrude and the children usually go to bed fairly soon after supper, leaving us two to continue the evening in study. I waited for that moment. But before speaking to him I felt my heart beat so rapidly and with such disturbing emotions that I didn't know how or dare to broach the subject that tormented me. He abruptly broke the silence by announcing his intention to spend all his vacation with us. But a few days before he had interested us in a plan to take a trip in the high Alps, of which my wife and I especially approved. I knew his friend T—, who had chosen him as his companion on this ex-

pedition, was expecting him; also, it seemed plain that this sudden change had some relation to the scene I had come upon by chance. At first a great indignation swept over me, but afraid, if I let myself be carried away with it, that my son would certainly close himself up completely, and also that I might come to regret too hasty words, with considerable effort I addressed him as naturally as possible.

"I thought T— was counting on you."

"Oh!" he replied. "He wasn't absolutely counting on me. Besides, he won't have any trouble finding someone to take my place. I can rest better here than in the mountains, and certainly I know I can make better use of my time than roving about the country."

"Well," I said, "you've found something to keep you busy here."

He looked at me, aware of a trace of irony in my voice, though unable yet to discern my motive.

"You know I've always preferred a book to an alpenstock, anyway," he replied easily.

"Yes, my boy," I said, looking steadily at him, "but don't you think you're more interested in giving organ lessons than you are in reading?"

Without doubt he seemed to blush, for he put his hand to his forehead, as if shading himself from the light of the lamp. But he was himself again almost immediately. I wished his voice might have been somewhat less assured.

"Don't accuse me unjustly, father. I didn't intend to hide anything from you. You've only anticipated the confession I was going to make."

He spoke sedately, as though he were reading a book, and talked so calmly, that it seemed as if he were older than I. I was exasperated by his extraordinary self-possession. Feeling I was about to interrupt, he raised his hand, as if to say: No, you may speak later: first allow me. But I seized his arm and shook him roughly.

"Rather than see you put trouble in Gertrude's pure mind," I cried impetuously, "I'd prefer never to see you again! Your confessions are unnecessary! I wouldn't have believed you capable of such cowardly abomination as abusing infirmity, innocence and candor! And to have you talk to me about it with such composure! Listen to me carefully! I have charge of Gertrude, and I will not tolerate your talking to her, touching her or seeing her for another day!"

"But, father," he replied, in that same tranquil voice that disturbed me so, "I respect Gertrude as much as you do yourself. You are absolutely mistaken if you accuse me this way; I don't want to tell you of my conduct alone, but also of my purpose, and the secret of my heart. I love Gertrude and respect her, I tell you; above all, I love her! The idea of troubling her, abusing her innocence and blindness would be as abominable to me as to you." Then he protested that he wanted to be a support, a

friend and a husband to her; that he had thought he oughtn't to speak to me about it before she had also agreed to marry him; that Gertrude didn't know anything about it herself yet, and he wanted to talk it over with me first. "That is the confession I had to make to you," he added. "There is nothing else to say."

His words filled me with astonishment. As I listened to them I felt completely beaten. I wasn't prepared for reproaches, consequently they took away all my powers of reasoning. At the end of his admission I could find nothing to say.

"Let us go to bed," I remarked, after a long silence. I got up and placed a hand on his shoulder. "To-morrow I will tell you what I think about it all."

"At least tell me you're not angry with me!"

"I need the night to think it over."

When I saw Jacques again next morning it truly seemed as if I were seeing him for the first time. It was suddenly apparent to me that my son was no longer a child, but a young man; while I had thought of him as a child, the scene I had discovered seemed monstrous. I spent the night persuading myself that, on the contrary, it was natural and normal. Why was my dissatisfaction gone? I could discover that only a little later. In the meantime I had to speak to Jacques and let him know my decision. An instinct as certain as that of conscience warned me that this marriage ought to be prevented at any cost.

I took Jacques to the end of the garden.

"Have you spoken about it to Gertrude?" I asked him first of all.

"No," he told me. "Perhaps she has already felt my love, but I haven't confessed it to her."

"Good! Promise me that you won't speak to her about it yet."

"I promise to obey you, father, but can you give me your reasons?"

I hesitated to give them to him, not being sure whether the first that came to mind were the ones that should be mentioned first. But I can say that I felt my present conduct was determined by good judgment.

"Gertrude is too young," I said, finally. "Remember, she hasn't yet received the sacrament. You know, alas, she's not a child like the others — her development has been considerably retarded. Trusting as she is, she will doubtless be susceptible to the first words of love she hears: that's precisely why it's important not to say them to her. To take possession of one who cannot defend herself is cowardly: I know you would not be a coward. Your feelings, you say, are not reprehensible. I say they are, because they are premature. Because Gertrude still lacks discretion, — we should have it for her. It is an affair of conscience."

Those simple words, "I appeal to your conscience," are sufficient to curb Jacques. I often used them when he was a child. Meanwhile, I

looked at him and thought how Gertrude, if she could but see, would never stop admiring his tall, slim body, so straight and supple; his handsome brow, free from wrinkles; his frank look, his boyish face, which, nevertheless, was now shadowed by sudden seriousness. He was bareheaded and his light hair, which he wore rather long, curled lightly from his temples, and half hid his ears.

"There's still something I want to ask you," I said, rising from the bench where we had been sitting. "You intended, as you said, to leave the day after to-morrow. I beg of you not to put off your departure. You should be away for at least a month: I ask you not to shorten your trip by even a day. Is that understood?"

"Quite, father. I will obey."

He became extremely pale — even his lips were colorless. But, I told myself, such a prompt submission meant his love could not be so very strong. That relieved me inexpressibly. Moreover, I was moved by his obedience.

"I have recovered the child I love," I said to him gently. Drawing him to me, I placed my lips on his forehead. There was a slight recoil on his part, but I did not wish to be affected by it.

March 10th.

Our house is so small that we are forced to live somewhat one on top of another, which is often difficult enough for my work, although I had set aside a little room where I could retire and receive my calls. Yet it was hard when I wanted to speak to one of my family in private, for the conversations there assumed a rather solemn air and, consequently, the children, in fun, called that room the "sacred place," where they were not allowed to enter. That same morning when Jacques left for Neuchâtel, where he had to buy some walking boots, he looked very handsome. After breakfast the children took Gertrude out walking, being careful to guide her all the time. (I am pleased to remark here that Charlotte was particularly attentive to her.) I found myself, quite naturally, alone with Amélie when it was time for luncheon, which we always took in the common room. That was what I had wanted, for I had put off talking to her. Because I so rarely have an opportunity for a tête-à-tête with her I was quite timid; what I had to tell her weighed heavily upon me also, not only Jacques' confession, but my own. Before beginning to talk I thought how persons, living the same lives, can shut themselves up completely from each other; everything they say being but plaintive warnings of the resistance of each separate division into which it seems impossible to penetrate. . . .

"Jacques told me last night and this morning," I began, while she was pouring tea, and my voice trembled as much as Jacques' had been assured yesterday, "he told me of his love for Gertrude."

"He was right in talking about it," she said, without looking at me, and going on with her household duties, as though I had told her the most ordinary thing, or rather as if I hadn't told her anything at all.

"He told me he wanted to marry her; he — "

"That's to be expected," she murmured, shrugging her shoulders slightly.

"Don't you believe it?" I inquired nervously.

"One could see it coming for a long time. Yet it's not the sort of thing men are apt to notice."

"In that case, you should have warned me," I objected simply, seeing it would do no good to protest, and that there was, perhaps, some truth in her retort.

"If I had to warn you about everything you don't notice!" she said, with a slightly crooked smile in the corners of her mouth, with which she often shielded her reticences.

I did not know what that insinuation signified, nor did I wish to learn. I ignored it.

"Well, I'd like to hear what you think about it."

"You know, my dear," she said, after a sigh, "I never approved of that girl's presence among us."

Her bringing up the past irritated me considerably.

"Gertrude's presence here is not the question," I replied, but she went on.

"I always knew it would only bring trouble."

"Then you have thought how difficult such a marriage would be!" I returned, animated by a strong desire for reconciliation. "Very well! That's what I wanted to hear from you. I'm glad we're both of the same mind." I added that Jacques had submitted docilely to the reasons I gave him, so that there was no longer any need for her to worry: it was agreed he would leave the next day on his trip, which would last a month.

"As I'm no more anxious than you for him to find Gertrude here when he returns," I said, "I thought the best thing would be to entrust her to Mademoiselle de la M—, where I could still see her, for I won't deny I have certain obligations towards her. I've already sounded her out; she's only too willing to help us. Thus, you will be rid of a presence that is painful to you. Louise de la M— is interested in Gertrude; she has expressed herself as delighted with the arrangement. Already she's been happy in giving her music lessons."

As Amélie seemed determined to remain silent, I went on.

"I think we ought to let Mademoiselle de la M— know about the situation, so that Jacques might not find Gertrude over there without us, don't you?"

I tried by that question to get a word from Amélie, but she kept her lips sealed, as though she had sworn not to say anything to me. I continued, not that I had anything to add, but simply because I could not bear her silence.

"Besides, when he comes back, Jacques may already be cured of his love. At his age, how could anyone know what he wants?"

"Oh, one doesn't always know that even later," she said, finally.

Her puzzling manner and words exasperated me for, by nature, I am too reserved to put up with mystery. Turning towards her, I begged her to explain just what she had meant by that.

"Nothing, my dear," she replied sadly. "Only I thought you wished that someone might warn you of things you weren't aware of."

"Well?"

"Well, I felt it is not easy to warn you."

I said I abhor mystery and, on principle, I never allow myself to be vague.

"When you want me to understand you, you ought to trouble to express yourself clearly," I retorted, perhaps somewhat brutally, which I regretted immediately afterwards. For I saw her lips tremble for an instant. She turned her head away, then, getting up, took several hesitant and unsteady steps.

"But, after all, Amélie," I cried, "why are you continuing to worry now that everything is settled?"

I felt my look troubled her, and turning aside, leaning my elbows on the table, I rested my head in my hands.

"I spoke harshly to you then," I told her. "Please forgive me."

I heard her approach and felt her fingers rest gently on my forehead.

"My poor dear!" she murmured tenderly in a voice full of tears. She immediately left the room.

Amélie's words at first so mysterious, became understandable a little afterwards; I have set them down as they seemed to me at first; and that day for the first time I came to understand that it was time Gertrude left.

March 12th.

I imposed upon myself the duty of setting aside a little time to Gertrude every day; to be, depending upon what I had to do, either a few hours or a few minutes. The day after that conversation with Amélie I found myself sufficiently free, and with the good weather as an added incentive, I took Gertrude through the forest, as far as that turning of the Jura where, if the weather is fair, through the screen of branches and across the immense commanding country, there is a wonderful view of the white Alps, above a slight haze. The sun had already begun to go down on our left when we reached the spot where we were accustomed to rest. A thickly growing and close-cut field of grass descended to our feet; not far away some cattle were grazing, each of the mountain herd with its bell.

"They paint the landscape," said Gertrude, listening to their tinkling.

She asked me, as she did on all our walks, to describe to her the place where we stopped.

"But," I told her, "you know it already. It's the border from where you can see the Alps."

"Can you see them clearly to-day?"

"You can see them in all their splendor."

"You said they were a little different every day."

"To what can I compare them to-day? To the thirst of a summer's day. Before evening they will be completely dissolved in the air."

"I wish you would tell me if there are any lilies in the large meadow before us."

"No, Gertrude, lilies don't grow at these altitudes. Or if they do, only rare kinds."

"But they're called lilies of the fields."

"There are no lilies in the fields."

"Not even in the fields near Neuchâtel?"

"There are no lilies of the fields."

"Then, why does the Lord tell us 'Consider the lilies of the fields'?"

"In his day they existed, without doubt: but the civilization of man has made them disappear."

"I remember you told me often that the greatest need of this world is to have faith and love. Don't you think with a little more faith men might begin to see them again? When I hear that saying, I assure you I see them. Shall I describe them to you? One might talk of the flaming bells, great bells of blue, full of perfume, which fills the air at night. Why do you tell me they don't exist? They are here before us: I feel them! I see the meadow all covered with them!"

"They are not as beautiful as they seem to you, my Gertrude!"

"Say they are not less beautiful!"

"They are as beautiful as you see them."

"'And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these,'" she said, quoting the words of Christ. So melodious was her voice that it seemed I heard those words for the first time. "'In all his glory,'" she repeated, thoughtfully, then remained silent some time.

"I have told you, Gertrude: those who have eyes do not know how to see," I said. And from the bottom of my heart I heard this prayer arise: "I give thanks, O Lord, for revealing to the humble that which You hide from the knowing!"

"If you could know," she cried, in sprightly exaltation, "if you could know how easily I imagine all that! Wait! Do you want me to describe the landscape to you? . . . Behind us, above us and around us, the great fir trees, smelling of rosin, with garnet trunks, and their long, dark, horizontal branches that moan when they are bent in the wind. At our feet, spread out like an open book on the great desk of the mountain, is the wide meadow, green and variegated, blue in the shadow, golden in the sun; the flowers are distinct words — gentians, pulsatilla, buttercups, and the beautiful lilies of Solomon — the cows spell them with their bells, which the

angels read, since you say the eyes of men are blind to them. Below the book I see a great river of smoky, foggy milk, covering a mysterious abyss, an immense river, without another bank, and beyond, over there very far off, the superb, dazzling Alps. . . . Jacques is going over there. Tell me: is it true he's going to-morrow?"

"He's going to-morrow. Did he tell you?"

"He didn't tell me; but I understood it. Will he be away long?"

"A month. . . . Gertrude, I want to ask you. . . . Why didn't you tell me he came to meet you at the church?"

"He came to meet me twice. Oh, I don't want to hide anything from you, but I was afraid of hurting you."

"You hurt me by saying nothing about it."

Her hand sought mine.

"He will be unhappy when he goes."

"Tell me, Gertrude . . . did he tell you he loved you?"

"He didn't tell me, but I felt it plainly, without it being said. He loves me as much as you do."

"And you, Gertrude, are you unhappy in seeing him go?"

"I think it's better for him to go. I could not respond to him."

"But, tell me: are you unhappy in seeing him go?"

"You know it's you I love, pastor! . . . Oh, why do you take your hand away? I wouldn't speak to you like this, if you weren't married. But one doesn't marry a blind person. Then, why can't we love each other? Tell me, pastor, you don't think it's wrong to love, do you?"

"Nothing is ever wrong in love."

"I feel only good in my heart. I don't want to make Jacques unhappy. I don't want to make anyone unhappy . . . I only want to give happiness."

"Jacques thought he wanted to marry you."

"Will you let me talk to him before he goes? I'll make him understand it's his duty to give up loving me. Pastor, you understand, don't you, that I can't marry anyone? You'll let me talk to him, then?"

"This evening."

"No, to-morrow. . . . Just before he goes." . . .

The sun went down in exalted splendor. The air was cool. We got up and retraced our steps along the dark road home.

April 25th.

I have had to give up this book for some time.

The snow finally melted away, and as soon as the roads became passable again I had to do a great many things I had been forced to neglect during the long period when our village was blocked up. Only yesterday did I have a few moments to myself.

Last night I read over again all I have written so far. . . .

To-day I dare to call by its name the feeling I had acknowledged for so long in my heart: I explain to myself with difficulty how I had been mis-

taken about it until now; how those words Amélie said to me seemed so mysterious; and, how, after Gertrude's naïve declarations I still wondered whether I loved her. I have never been able to recognize love as being justifiable without marriage, and in the feeling which swept me so passionately towards Gertrude I was unable to recognize anything that was forbidden.

I was reassured by the simplicity and frankness of her confessions. I told myself she was only a child. A genuine love would not be without confusion or embarrassment. And for my part I felt I loved her as one would love an invalid child. I cared for her as one cared for someone who was sick — my impulse I had turned into a moral obligation, a duty. Yes, truly, even on that evening when she spoke to me as I have written, I felt my spirit so light and joyous that I was still mistaken in my feeling, just as I was in setting down her words. Feeling that love would be censured, and that everything censurable degraded, I did not believe it was love because my spirits were anything but burdened.

I have reported conversations which had to do with these feelings, as well as others written in a like frame of mind: and the truth is that it was only in reading them over again last night that I first understood. . . .

Soon after Jacques left — I let Gertrude talk to him and he is not to return for the last days of his vacation, either affecting to avoid Gertrude or not to talk to her again before me — our life resumed its tranquil course. Gertrude, as planned, went to stay with Mademoiselle Louise, where I went to see her every day. But, still in fear of love, I was careful not to discuss anything which might stir us. I spoke to her only as a pastor would, busying myself chiefly with her religious instruction and preparing her to receive the sacrament on Easter.

Easter Day I gave the communion myself.

That was a fortnight ago. To my surprise, Jacques, who came to spend a week's vacation with us, did not accompany me to the service. And I greatly regret to add that Amélie, for the first time since our marriage, was also absent. It seemed that both of them, by their disloyalty on that solemn occasion, had agreed to cast gloom on my happiness. Still I was glad Gertrude could not see I was alone in bearing the burden of the gloom. I was sure Amélie could not have been aware of anything reproachable in her action. She never censured me openly, but made her denial through a sort of loneliness.

I was deeply moved that such a grievance — I wish to say I am loath to consider it such — had impelled Amélie's spirit to the point of turning her away from higher interests. When I returned home I prayed for her with all the sincerity of my heart.

As for Jacques' abstention, that was due to other motives, and a conversation I had with him shortly afterwards, shed light upon it.

May 3rd.

Because of Gertrude's religious instruction I was led to read the Gospels over again from a new viewpoint. It seemed more and more apparent that the number of ideas of which our Christian faith is composed, are brought forth not by the words of Christ, but by St. Paul's commentaries.

This was, in effect, the subject of a discussion I have just had with Jacques. Of a somewhat cool disposition, his heart does not provide sufficient nourishment for his mind; he is becoming traditional and dogmatic. He reproaches me for picking out of the teachings of Christianity "whatever I like." But I don't choose this or that saying from Christ. Simply, between Christ and St. Paul, I choose Christ. Afraid of having to compare them, he doesn't allow himself to dissociate one from the other, refusing to feel any difference of inspiration in either of them, and protests if I tell him that here I am listening to a man, there I hear God. The more he argues, the more am I convinced how absurd it is to stress the lesser words of Christ as altogether divine.

I look through the Gospels for command, threat, defense, in vain. . . . All that is only in St. Paul. And it is precisely because it cannot be found in the teachings of Christ, that Jacques is disturbed. Minds like his are lost as soon as they go a step away from their teachers, their fences and railings. Uneasily do they bear a liberty at the hands of others to which they are resigned, hoping to receive by restraint whatever might be given them in love. . . . .

"But, father," he said, "I also long for the happiness of souls."

"No, my boy. All you want is their submission."

"Happiness can be found in submission."

I let him have the last word, because I dislike arguing; I was well aware how one could compromise happiness in trying to obtain what might be instead only an effect of happiness. I know it is right to think a loving spirit rejoices in voluntary submission, getting nothing more from happiness than a submission without love.

In other respects, Jacques reasons well, and aside from the fact that I was hurt to find such doctrinal inflexibility in so young a mind, I had to admire the quality of his arguments and the consistency of his logic. I often feel younger than he; to-day even younger than I was before, and I repeated that saying: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

Is it betraying Christ, is it in any way detracting from or profaning the Gospel to find there above all *a way to arrive at a happy life?* The state of joy, which ends our doubts and the hardness of our hearts, is obligatory for every Christian. Every being is more or less capable of joy. One laugh of Gertrude taught me that more effectively than all my teachings.

This utterance of Christ comes vividly before me: "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin." Sin, which obscures the spirit, is opposed to happi-

ness. Gertrude's perfect happiness, which radiates through her entire being, is the result of her not knowing of the existence of sin. In her is only brightness and love.

I put between her busy hands the four Gospels, the Psalms, the Revelations and the three Epistles of John, wherein she might read: "God is light, and in him in no darkness at all," as already in her Gospel she had heard the Savior say: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness." I did not give her the Epistles of Paul, for if, blind, she did not know sin, it might disturb her in reading the words, "that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (*Romans* VII, 13) and the reasoning that follows, admirable as it is.

May 8th.

Doctor Martins is here from Chaux de Fond. He examined Gertrude's eyes through the opthalmoscope at some length. He said he had talked of Gertrude to Doctor Roux, the specialist in Lausanne, to whom he had reported certain of his observations. Both of them felt that Gertrude should undergo an operation. But we decided not to tell her anything about it at all except what was quite certain. Martins would come to let me know after the consultation. What good would it do to cause Gertrude to hope for something which might, after all, not come to pass? — Besides, isn't she happy as she is?

May 10th.

At Easter Jacques and Gertrude saw each other again in my presence — at least Jacques saw Gertrude and spoke to her, but only of inconsequential things. He seemed to be less moved than I had feared, and again I persuaded myself, with some vehemence that, in spite of what Gertrude had said to him, in a year's time his love would easily have disappeared. That he now feels as he does about Gertrude is infinitely preferable; and, not ordering it thus, I am happy he came to understand himself. There is undeniably much good in him.

I suspect, all the same, that Jacques' submission had not come about without debate and struggling. The restraint he had to impose on his heart now appears good to him; he would have wished to impose it on both; I felt that in the discussion I just had with him. Wasn't it La Rochefoucauld who said that the mind is often the dupe of the heart? It goes without saying that I didn't dare say anything about it to Jacques afterwards, realizing that his mind was one of those that were easily rendered obstinate by discussion; but that same evening having found in the words of St. Paul, (I could fight him with his own weapons,) a good reply to him, I took care to leave in his room a note on which he might read: "Let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him." (*Romans* XIV, 3).

I would also have copied the following: "I know, and I am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that

esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean" — but I did not dare, fearing Jacques might see some offensive interpretation in regard to Gertrude in my mind, which might not even be in his. Evidently this is a question of nourishment; but does not one attribute double and triple meanings to many other passages of the Scriptures? ("If thy eye . . ." Multiplication of the loaves; miracle at the wedding at Cana, etc. . . .) This isn't a matter to quibble over; the significance of that verse is great and profound: restraint ought not to be dictated by law, but by love, and St. Paul, immediately afterwards, declares: "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably." It is want of love that sets the Devil on us. Oh Lord, remove from my heart all that does not appertain to love! . . . For I had done wrong to provoke Jacques: the day after, I found on my desk the same note on which I had copied the verse, and on the back of the paper Jacques had simply added this other verse from the same chapter: "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." (*Romans* XIV, 15.)

I read all that chapter over again. It forms a point of departure for endless discussion. Could I torment with these perplexities, darken with these clouds, Gertrude's luminous heaven? Wasn't I nearer Christ, keeping her nearer Him, too, when I made her believe that the only sin is that which interferes with the happiness of others, or compromises our own happiness?

Alas, certain souls remain particularly impervious to happiness; . . . inept and awkward. . . . I think of poor Amélie. I urge her incessantly, stirring her up, and try to force her on. Yes, I would raise each one to God. But she always escapes, shutting herself up like certain flowers which bloom only in the sun. Everything she sees disturbs and distresses her.

"What do you wish, my dear?" she said to me the other day. "It was not given to me to be blind."

How unhappy her irony makes me and what an effort I make to avoid being troubled by it! Nevertheless, I think she ought to know how deeply any allusion to Gertrude's infirmity wounds me. She made me realize, however, that what I admire most in Gertrude is her infinite meekness: I never knew her to make the least complaint against anyone. It is true I could not let her know anything that might hurt her.

And even her happy spirit, which spreads happiness everywhere about her, only make Amélie utterly somber and morose. Amélie's spirit emitted only gloom. After a day of effort, visiting the poor, sick and afflicted, returning towards nightfall, frequently harassed, my heart sadly in need of repose, affection and warmth, I found in my home usually only worrying, recriminations, jarrings, to which I preferred a thousand times over the cold wind and rain of out-of-doors. I know our old Rosalie never bothers much about anything; nor is she always wrong and Amélie always right when she makes her give in to her. I know Charlotte and Gaspard

are frightfully boisterous; but wouldn't it be better for Amélie if she didn't shout so loudly and steadily at them? Like pebbles on the beach, orders, admonitions and reprimands lose all their effectiveness; the children are less disturbed than I. I know little Claude is cutting his teeth, but isn't it making him worse, to appease him for the time being, when she or Sarah is spoiling him incessantly? It seems he cries less often if he is occasionally allowed to cry to his heart's content when I am not there? But I know that they run to him more than ever when he cries.

Sarah is like her mother, and for that reason I should like to send her away to boarding-school. She is, alas! nothing like what her mother was at her age, when we were engaged, but what one would become after all the cares of a dull life. Assuredly, it is hard to recognize in her to-day that spirit which smiled, only a short while back, at each burst of my heart, which I came to associate indistinctly with my life, which seemed to guide me towards the light — or, was love cheating then? I discover in Sarah only vulgar preoccupations; like her mother, she lets herself be worried by paltry cares; even the features of her face have become hardened and dejected, reflecting no inner spiritual flame. She has no taste for poetry or general reading; I never overheard a conversation between her and her mother in which I had any wish to take part, and I feel my isolation most of all when I am busy at my desk near them.

Since autumn, encouraged by the early nightfall, I have been in the habit of going whenever my rounds allowed me — that is to say, when I could return early enough — to take tea at Mademoiselle de la M—'s house. I have not yet mentioned the fact that since last November Louise de la M— and Gertrude have been taking care of three little blind girls whom Martins entrusted to her. Gertrude herself is teaching them to read and do some easy tasks, in which they are already becoming quite skilful.

Each time I return to the warm atmosphere of La Grange is a great relief for me, and I often long to stay there two or three days without going away. Mademoiselle de la M—, it goes without saying, is looking after Gertrude and the three little girls without any considerable trouble or inconvenience; three servants help her with great devotion, sparing her all fatigue. Never were fortune and leisure more deserved! Louise de la M— is always deeply interested in the poor; hers is a profoundly religious spirit, which it seems was born only to give love; in spite of her hair, already silvered like a lace cap, there is nothing more youthful than her smile, nothing more harmonious than her movements, nor more musical than her voice. Gertrude has adopted her manners and way of talking, with a certain intonation, not only in her voice but in her entire being. I often joke with them both about this similarity, but they pretend not to notice it. How charming it is, if I have time to linger awhile with them, to see them sitting together, Gertrude resting her forehead on her friend's shoulder, holding one of her hands between her own, listening while I read some

verses of Lamartine or Hugo. How delightful to see the reflection of that poetry in those two clear minds! Even the little girls are not unconscious of it. These children are developing unusually, making remarkable progress in this atmosphere of peace and love. I smiled at first when Mademoiselle Louise was telling them they should learn to dance, for the sake of health as well as for pleasure; but now I admire the rythmic grace of the movements they make, which they themselves, unfortunately, are incapable of appreciating. However, Louise de la M— persuades me that they are aware of the movements they cannot see through a sense of muscular harmony. Gertrude joins in these dances with charm and real grace, taking, moreover, the greatest delight in it. Or sometimes, it is Louise de la M— who throws herself into play with the youngsters, while Gertrude sits at the piano. Her progress in music, by the way, has been nothing short of amazing; she now plays the organ in church every Sunday, and as a prelude to the singing of the hymns makes short improvisations.

Each Sunday she comes to breakfast with us; my children greet her with evident pleasure, despite the difference in their tastes and feelings. Amélie is not so nervous now, and the meal passes without hindrance. Then all the family accompany Gertrude back to La Grange. It is always an event for the children, since Louise takes pleasure in loading them down with dainties. Amélie herself, unmoved by these attentions, finally unbends and appears rejuvenated. I believe that in the future it will be with difficulty that she will go back to the tedious routine of her life.

May 18th.

Now that the weather is pleasant, I have been able to go walking with Gertrude again, which I hadn't done for some time; (just lately there were more snow storms and the roads have been in a frightful state until a few days ago;) nor had I been able to find myself alone with her for quite a while.

We walked at a quick pace; the brisk wind reddened her cheeks and was continually blowing her yellow hair about her face. As we skirted a peat-bog I picked some flowers in the rushes, and tucked them under her hat, weaving them into her hair in order that they might stay fast.

We had still scarcely spoken, for we were embarrassed at being alone together, when Gertrude suddenly turned her face to me.

"Do you think Jacques still loves me?" she asked.

"He is determined to give you up," I replied at once.

"But do you think he knows you love me?" she said.

Since that conversation last summer which I have already set down, more than six months passed (which surprised me) without the least word of love being uttered between us. We were never alone, as I said, that was doubtless for the best. . . . Gertrude's question made my heart beat so fast that I had to slacken our pace somewhat.

"All the world knows I love you, Gertrude," I cried.

"No, no! You're not answering my question."

"Aunt Amélie knows it," she went on, after a moment of silence, "and I know it makes her sad."

"She would be sad, anyway," I protested, in a voice that showed my lack of assurance. "It is her nature to be sad."

"Oh, you're always trying to reassure me," she said, with a sort of impatience. "But I don't have to be reassured. There are many things, I know, you've not told me, for fear of disturbing or hurting me, things I don't know, so that sometimes . . . "

Her voice became lower and lower; she stopped as though out of breath.

"Sometimes — ?" I repeated.

"So that sometimes," she went on sadly, "all the happiness I owe you seems based on ignorance."

"But, Gertrude . . ."

"No, let me tell you: I don't want happiness like that. Understand that I . . . I don't have to be happy. I'd rather know. There are many things, some of them unpleasant, to be sure, that I can't see, but you haven't any right to keep me ignorant of them. I've thought about it a great deal during these winter months; you see, I'm afraid the whole world isn't as beautiful as you want me to believe, pastor — in fact, far from it."

"It's true man often disfigures the earth," I argued, timorously, for the flights of her thought frightened me, and I tried to bring her back from this state of depression to confidence. It seemed those words moved her.

"Precisely!" she cried. "I want to be sure I won't add to the wrong."

For quite a while we continued to walk quickly, in silence. Everything I might tell her clashed with what I felt must be in her mind; I dreaded, too, bringing up some phrase which might concern ourselves. And a great anguish filled my heart as I thought of what Martins had told me — that perhaps she might be able to see.

"I'd like to ask you," she said, finally, "but I don't know how to say it . . ."

She summoned all her courage, as I had had to summon mine in listening. But how was I to forsee the question that tormented her?

"Are the children of a blind person necessarily born blind?"

I hadn't an inkling of how much further our conversation would oppress us; but now, at least, it had to go on.

"No, Gertrude," I told her. "Except in very rare cases. There's no reason why they should be."

That seemed to reassure her considerably. I wanted to ask her, however, why she had asked that, but I didn't dare.

"But, Gertrude," I said, awkwardly, "one has to be married to have children."

"Don't tell me that, pastor! I know it's not true!"

"I've told you what is right for me to tell you," I protested. "But, in effect, the laws of nature allow what is forbidden by the laws of man and God."

"You've often told me the laws of God are the same as the laws of love."

"In that case the word love is used in the sense of charity."

"Do you love me, then, with a sense of charity?"

"You know I don't, Gertrude!"

"Do you believe our love should be shunned according to the laws of God?"

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, you know it. I shouldn't be the one to speak."

In vain I tried to evade the issue; but my heart threw my arguments into confusion.

"Gertrude," I cried, desperately, "do you think our love is sinful?"

"*Our* love . . . I tell myself that I ought to think so."

"Well?" The pleading of my voice surprised me.

"But, I could never stop loving you!" she added, without recovering her breath.

All this took place yesterday. I hesitated to write it down at first . . . I do not know how the walk ended. We walked with hurried steps, as if escaping from something, and I held her arm pressed tight against mine. At this point I felt my spirit leave my body — it seemed that the least pebble on the road could roll us to earth.

May 19th.

Martins returned this morning. Gertrude can be operated upon, Roux has decided, and asks that she be entrusted to him for some time. I am not against it but, like a coward, I demanded time to think it over. I asked that they let me prepare her gently. . . . My heart ought to have leapt with joy, but I felt it weigh upon me instead, heavy with an unspeakable anguish. My heart failed me at the thought of having to tell Gertrude that she might be able to see.

Night of May 19th.

I have seen Gertrude, but could not talk to her. At La Grange this evening, as there was no one in the drawing-room, I went up to her room. We were alone.

For a long time I held her pressed close to me. She made no movement to defend herself, and as she raised her face to mine, our lips met. . . .

May 21st.

Did you make the night so profound and so beautiful for us, Oh Lord? For me? The air is mild and the moon streams through my open window as I listen to the immense silence of the heavens. Oh dim adoration of all creation, dissolving my heart in an ecstasy without words! I can pray only passionately. If there is a limitation in love, it is not for You, O Lord, but for men. Sinful though my love might seem in the eyes of men, Oh, tell me that in Yours it is sacred!

I try to lift myself above the thought of sin; but sin seems intolerable, and I do not wish to abandon Christ. No, I do not acknowledge sin, in loving Gertrude. I cannot tear from my heart the sin which tortures me, and why? If I did not love her so already, I ought to love her by pitying her; but no longer loving her would be betrayal: and she needs my love! . . .

Lord, I no longer know. . . . Guide me! Sometimes it seems that I am sunken into the darkness and that the sight which they shall give her is taken away from me.

Gertrude entered the clinic at Lausanne yesterday. She is to stay there twenty days. I await her return with extreme apprehension. Martins is to bring her back. She made me promise not to try to see her there.

May 12th.

Letter from Martins: the operation was successful! God be praised!

May 14th.

The idea that I would have to be seen by her who, until then, loved me without seeing me — that idea made me intolerably anxious. Would she recognize me? For the first time in my life I looked uneasily into a mirror. If her eyes are less indulgent than her heart, what will become of me? Lord, it seems sometimes I need her love in order to love You.

May 27th.

An increase of work has permitted me to pass the days without too much impatience. Each occupation which could drag me away from myself was blessed; but all day long, through everything, her image followed me.

To-morrow she is to return. Amélie, who during this week has shown only the best side of her disposition, and seems to have taken pains to make me forget the absent one, is getting ready with the children to celebrate her return.

May 28th.

Gaspard and Charlotte have been gathering all the flowers they could find in the woods and fields. Old Rosalie is making a monumental cake that Sarah is adorning with I don't know what ornaments of gilt paper. We are expecting her at noon.

I am writing in order to occupy the time while waiting. It is eleven o'clock. Every moment I raise my head to look down the road where Martins' carriage will appear. I keep myself from going to meet them: it is better, in respect to Amélie, not to divide up. My heart is bounding. . . . Ah! Here they are!

Evening of the 28th.

In what gloom am I plunged!

Mercy, Lord, mercy! I will give up loving her, but, You, O Lord, do not let her die!

That I might still have reason to be afraid! What has she done? What

did she want to do? Amélie and Sarah told me they accompanied her as far as the door of La Grange, where Mademoiselle de la M— was waiting for her. Then she wanted to go back. . . . What has happened?

I am trying to put my thoughts somewhat in order. The accounts they gave me are either incomplete or contradictory. Everything is in confusion in my mind. . . . Mademoiselle de la M—'s gardener brought her back unconscious to La Grange. He said he had seen her walk along the path by the river, then go beyond the end of the garden and disappear. But, not having at first understood that she fell, he didn't go as fast as he might have done. He found her near the little flood-gate that had been opened by the current. When I saw her a little later, she hadn't regained consciousness. In an instant she recovered herself, thanks to the care lavished upon her. Martins who, thank God, had not yet left, explains the sort of stupor and indolence into which she is sunk; in vain he questioned her: one would either say she heard nothing or else was determined to keep silent. Her breathing is still very oppressive and Martins is afraid of a pulmonary congestion. He applied mustard plaster and cupping glasses and promised to return to-morrow. The mistake had been made of leaving her in her wet clothes too long, when they were first busy in revivifying her, for the water of the river was freezing. Mademoiselle de la M—, who was the only one able to get any words from her, maintains she had wanted to pick some forget-me-nots which grow in abundance on the bank of the river, and being awkward in estimating distances, or mistaking the flowers for solid earth, she had suddenly lost her footing. . . . If I could believe it! What frightful weights would be removed from my mind if I could only be convinced that it was an accident! All through the meal, so gay, her strange smile, that never left her face, disturbed me; a restrained smile that I didn't recognize at first, but which I was forced to believe was due to her new sight; a smile which seemed to trickle down from her eyes like tears, in comparison to which the vulgar joy of the others was offensive. She didn't give herself up to the merriment: it seemed as though she had discovered a secret which, without doubt, she would have confided to me had we been alone. She scarcely said a word; but it wasn't surprising, for among the others, so exuberant, she is often silent.

Oh, Lord, I implore you: permit her to speak to me! I need to know, for how could I keep on living if I didn't? Yet, if she wished to stop living, is that precisely to have *known?* Known what? My dear, have you learned something horrible? You, whom I shielded from earthly things, have you suddenly been able to see?

I have spent more than two hours by her bedside, never taking my eyes from her face, her pale cheeks, her delicate eyes closed in indescribable sorrow, her hair still wet and spread out about her on the pillow like seaweed — listening to her troubled and irregular breathing.

May 29th.

Mademoiselle Louise came to call me this morning, just when I was about to go to La Grange. After a slightly calmer night, Gertrude finally sank into a torpor. She smiled at me when I came into her room and motioned for me to sit down by her bed. I didn't dare to question her, and, no doubt, she was afraid I might do so, for she started talking immediately as though to prevent me.

"What do you call those little blue flowers that I wanted to pick by the river — they are colored like the sky? Will you gather me a bouquet of them? You can do it more easily than I. I'd like them there, near my bed. . . ."

The forced gaiety in her voice saddened me. She seemed to feel this.

"I can't talk to you this morning," she added, more gravely, "I'm too tired. You'll gather those flowers for me, won't you? You can come back later."

As I carried a bouquet of forget-me-nots to her an hour later, Mademoiselle Louise told me Gertrude was sleeping again and couldn't see me before evening.

This evening I saw her again. A pile of cushions supported her, keeping her sitting up. Her hair, which was carefully brushed and braided over her forehead now, was entwined with some of the forget-me-nots I had gathered for her.

She had a heavy fever and seemed very dejected. She kept in her burning hand the hand I held out to her. I remained standing near her.

"I have a confession to make to you, pastor, for I'm afraid of dying this evening," she said. "I lied to you this morning. It wasn't to gather flowers. . . . Can you forgive me if I tell you I wanted to kill myself?"

I fell on my knees near her bed, keeping her frail hand in mine; but freeing it, she commenced to caress my forehead, while I buried my face in the sheets to hide my tears from her and to muffle my sobs.

"Is it so hard — knowing it?" she asked, tenderly. Then, as I could not reply, she went on. "My dear, my dear, you see I take up too much room in your heart and in your life! It was clear the moment I saw you again. For the place I occupied was another's, and that made me sad. What is wrong is that I didn't feel that sooner; or, at least — for now I know it well — to have let you love me. But when I suddenly saw her poor, sad face, I couldn't bear the thought that I was responsible for her unhappiness. No, don't say anything in reproach — just let me go away and make her happy!"

Her hand stopped caressing my forehead; I seized it and covered it with kisses and tears. She snatched it away impatiently, and waved it with a new anguish.

"That's not what I want to tell you; no, that's not what I want to tell you!" she repeated, and I could see beads of perspiration moisten her

forehead. Then she closed her eyes, keeping them closed for some time, as if to retire within herself or return to that former state of blindness.

"When you gave me my sight," she said in a languid and desolate voice, which she raised as soon as she opened her eyes, "my eyes were opened on a world more beautiful than I could ever have imagined it to be! Yes, truly, I could not imagine the day was so clear, the air so brilliant and the sky so vast. But no more did I imagine the cares on the brow of men. And when I came back, know that I saw first of all . . . ah, it's especially important for me to tell you this! What I saw first of all was our wrong, our sin. No, don't protest! Remember the words of Christ: 'If ye were blind, ye should have no sin.' But now I see. Get up, pastor. Sit there, near me. Listen and don't interrupt. While I was at the clinic I read, or rather I heard read, passages of the Bible which I didn't yet know, which you never read to me. I remember a verse of St. Paul, which I repeated all one day: 'For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.'"

She talked in a state of utter exaltation, her voice very high and almost shouting those last words, making me afraid they might hear her outside. She closed her eyes again, repeating those last words, as if to herself, in a faint whisper.

"Sin revived — and I died."

I shuddered, my heart frozen in terror. I wanted to divert her thoughts.

"Who read those verses to you?" I demanded.

"Jacques," she replied, opening her eyes and looking steadily at me. "You know he is changed?"

It was too much; I was about to beg her to keep silent, but she went on.

"My dear, I am going to make you suffer deeply, but there must be no deceit between us. When I saw Jacques, I suddenly knew that it was not you I loved, but him. He had exactly your face — that is he had exactly the face I imagined you had. . . . Oh, why did you make him go away? I wanted to marry him . . ."

"But, Gertrude, you can still!" I cried, hopelessly.

"He is going to take orders," she said vehemently, shaken by sobs. "Ah, I wanted to tell him!" . . . She sighed in a kind of ecstasy. . . . "You see, nothing's left for me but death! — I'm thirsty! Call someone, I beg of you! I'm suffocating! Leave me alone! Oh, to talk to you like this! Leave me! Leave us! I can't bear to see you any longer!"

I left her and called Mademoiselle de la M— to take my place beside her; her extreme agitation made me afraid my presence had rendered her condition worse. I begged them to let me know if she were sinking.

May 30th.

I saw her again only in sleep. This morning, at daybreak, she died, after a night of delirium and depression. Jacques, at Gertrude's last request, had been sent for in haste by Mademoiselle de la M—, but did not arrive until

some hours after the end. He reproached me severely for not having called a priest while there was yet time. But how was I to know, still ignorant of his sojourn at Lausanne, what Gertrude had done, evidently urged on by him? Two beings thus left me together: separated by me all through life, they had contrived to fly from me, to be reunited in God. But I persuaded myself that Jacques' conversion was the greatest argument for love.

"Father," he said to me, "it isn't right to accuse you, but it was the example of your mistake that guided me."

After Jacques had gone away, I knelt down beside Amélie, asking her to pray for me, for I needed help. She repeated simply, "Our Father, Who art . . ." but putting long pauses between the verses, which were filled with our supplication.

I would have liked to weep, but I felt my heart as dry as the desert.

Italy

INTRODUCTION

BY THE time the Italian language had developed into a literary instrument, the Italian tale as a form of popular entertainment was pretty well established. The folklore and traditions of ancient and Medieval Rome had entered into the consciousness of the Italian people. Some time before the Renaissance, influences from the Orient had already made themselves felt, and by the time the first story-writers had collected their tales into books, there was a considerable store of material ready to hand. The first of these collections was the *Hundred Ancient Tales*, an accumulation of short stories, fables, and legends. The most famous of all these collections was *The Decameron* of Giovanni Boccaccio, written not long after the great plague of 1348. The *Novela*, or tale, as developed by Boccaccio, was generally rather short, though its subject-matter was often as susceptible of development and expansion as the plot of the longest novel. Boccaccio's followers were numerous and many of them exceptionally talented. Among them probably the greatest was Bandello. From the days of the Renaissance to the dawn of the Nineteenth Century, Italian writers continued to write *Novelle*, even after the pastoral romance had taken the place of the shorter forms in the estimation of the reading public.

During the Nineteenth Century Italian writers were greatly influenced by the Romantic Movement of other European countries, especially of France. The early years of the century were rendered notable by the writings of Manzoni, the rise of the modern novel, and the romantic drama. It was not until after the middle of the century that the short novel and the short story came into their own, in the hands of Verga, De Amicis, Fogazzaro, Serao, and D'Annunzio. Of the more recent writers, Luigi Pirandello is one of the most talented as a writer of stories, though at present he is better known to the world at large as a dramatist.

MATTEO BANDELLO

(1480?–1560)

BORN in Lombardy about 1480, Matteo Bandello resided first in Milan and later in Mantua, as a member of one of the monastic orders. He was eventually made a Bishop by Henry II of France. He led a long and somewhat adventurous existence. His extensive collection of tales, published under the general title of *Novelle*, is a variegated and highly-colored storehouse of love-romances and thrilling stories of adventure, related in a vigorous style.

The story that follows was used by Shakespeare as the basis of his plot for *Romeo and Juliet*, though he missed, by using a garbled French version, the "supreme pathos of the lovers' death scene."

The present translation is by Percy Pinkerton, and is reprinted, by permission of the publisher, from *The Italian Novelists*, David Nutt, London, 1894. The title of the story in the original is *Of the sad end of two hapless lovers, one dying of poison, and the other of grief; together with sundry events.*

ROMEO AND GIULIETTA

IF THE affection which deservedly I cherish for my own native country do not deceive me, few cities, I take it, in this fair Italy of ours can excel Verona in beauty of position, placed as it is on so noble a river as the Adige, whose limpid waters divide the city, and cause it to abound in such merchandise as Germany sends thither. Fair fruitful hills and pleasant valleys environ it, while its beauty is enhanced by many fountains of pure sparkling water, as also by four stately bridges across the river, and by a thousand other notable objects of antiquity which may there be seen. But if I speak now, it is not because I am moved to praise my native nest, which of itself proclaims its own merit and distinction, for I would tell you of the lamentable misfortunes that befell two noble lovers in this city.

At the time of the Signori della Scala there were two families in Verona renowned for their high birth and great wealth: These were the Montecchi and the Capelletti, between whom, for some reason or other, there existed a fierce and bloody feud, and, there being strength on either side, in various frays many were killed, not only of the Montecchi and the Capelletti but also of their followers and partisans. This served ever to augment their mutual hate.

Bartolomeo Scala, being at that time lord of Verona, was at great pains to pacify both parties; but so deeply rooted was their hatred, that he could never bring them to order. Nevertheless, if he might not establish peace, he at any rate put a stop to the perpetual frays which too often resulted in loss of life; and if they chanced to meet, the younger men always gave way to the elder of their adversaries.

It happened that one winter, soon after Christmas, festivals were held, which maskers attended in large numbers. Antonio Capelletto, the head of his house, gave a very splendid entertainment, to which he invited many noblemen and gentlefolk. Most of the young bloods of the city were there, among them being Romeo Montecchio, a youth of twenty or thereabouts, and the handsomest and most courteous in all Verona. Wearing a mask, he went with several of his companions to Capelletto's house at nightfall. Just then Romeo was deeply enamoured of a gentlewoman, whose slave he had been for nearly two years, and, though he constantly followed her to churches and other places, she had never yet vouchsafed him so much as a single glance. Often had he written letters to her and sent messages; but so hard of heart was she that she would not smile graciously upon the love-sick youth, and this grieved him so much that he resolved to leave Verona, and stay away for one or two years, so that by travelling here and there in Italy he might abate the vehemence of his passion. Then again, overcome by his fervent love, he blamed himself for harbouring so foolish a thought, and it appeared utterly impossible to quit Verona. At times he would say to himself: "It can no longer be true that I love her, for in a thousand ways I have had clear proofs that she does not value my devotion. Why should I persist in following her everywhere, since courting her is useless? It behoves me never to go to a church nor any other place that she frequents, so that, not seeing her, this fire within me that is fomented by her beautiful eyes may gradually die out."

Alas! all such thoughts proved vain, for it seemed that the more coy she showed herself, giving him less reason to hope, the more his love for her increased, and on no day that he did not see her could he be happy or at ease. As his devotion became ever deeper and more constant, some of his friends feared that he would waste away, and they often admonished him and besought him to relinquish such an enterprise. But for their warnings and healthful counsel he cared as little as did the lady for his love.

Romeo had a comrade who was deeply concerned about his hopeless love, and greatly regretted that in pursuit of a woman he should lose his golden youth and the very flower of his years. He would often expostulate with Romeo upon the subject; and one day he said: "Loving you, Romeo, as I do like a brother, it sorely vexes me to see you wasting thus like snow before the sun. As all that you do and all that you spend brings

you neither honour nor profit, for you cannot induce her to love you and all your efforts only make her more froward, why should you longer strive in vain? It is quite clear to you that for you and for your service she cares not a jot. It may be that she has some lover who is so dear and pleasant to her that she would not leave him for an emperor. You are young — perhaps the comeliest youth in all Verona; moreover, you are courteous, amiable, brave, and well versed in letters—to youth, a rare adornment. You are your father's only son; whose great riches are well known to all. Has he ever shown himself close-fisted towards you, or scolded you for spending and giving just as you liked? He is your man of business, toiling to amass wealth for you, and letting you do just what pleases you. Rouse yourself then, and see the error of your ways. Strip off the veil that blinds your eyes and will not let you see the road in which you should walk. Resolve to turn your thoughts elsewhere, and to make some woman your mistress who shall be worthy of you. Entertainments and masked balls are about to be given in the city; to all of these you must go. If by chance you should meet her whom you have so long courted in vain, give her not a glance, but look in the mirror of that love which you bore for her, and doubtless you will find recompense for all the ills that you have suffered. Disdain most just and reasonable will then be aroused within you, which shall presently daunt your ill-regulated passion, and shall set you free.

With many similar arguments Romeo's trusty comrade sought to turn him from so hapless an enterprise. Romeo listened patiently, and determined to profit by such wise counsel. He went to all the festivals, and whenever he met the froward damsel he never gave her a look but turned all his attention to others, examining them critically with a view to choosing the one he liked best, just as if he had come to market to buy a doublet or a horse.

Thus, as we have said, Romeo went to the festival given by the Capelletti and after wearing his mask for a while he took it off, and sat down in a corner whence he could leisurely survey all who were in the hall, where numerous torches made the light as bright as that of day. Every one looked at Romeo, especially the ladies, and all wondered that he should show himself thus freely in the house. But, as in addition to great good looks he had most charming manners, everybody took a liking to him, and his enemies gave no heed to him, as they might have done had he been older. Thus Romeo figured there as a judge of the beauty of all those ladies who came to the ball, praising this or that one as the fancy took him, preferring to criticise rather than to dance.

Suddenly he noticed a maiden of extraordinary beauty, whom he did not know. She pleased him infinitely, and he deemed her the loveliest and most graceful damsel that he had ever seen. The more he gazed at her, the more beautiful and charming did she seem to become, so he

began to throw her amorous glances; in fact, he could not take his eyes off her. A strange joy filled him as he looked, and he inwardly resolved to use every endeavour to win her favour and her love. Thus supplanted by this new affection his love for the other lady waned, and its fires were extinguished. Having set foot in love's delicious maze, Romeo, while not daring to inquire who the damsel might be, was content to feast his eyes upon her beauty, and as thus captivated by her charm he waxed eloquent in praise of her every gesture, insensibly he drank in draughts of the luscious poison of love. As I have said, he sat in a corner of the ball-room, and watched all the dancers as they passed. The name of the maiden whose beauty thus charmed him was Giulietta, and she was the daughter of the host. To her Romeo was unknown, but he seemed to her the handsomest youth she had ever met, and she took a strange pleasure in looking at him, though she did this in shy, furtive fashion, while in her heart she felt a rapture indefinably delicious and immeasurably sweet. She was most anxious that Romeo should dance with her, so that she might the better see him and hear him speak, believing that in his voice there would be as great a charm as in his eyes. But Romeo showed no desire to dance, and sat there in his corner alone, intently gazing at the lovely damsel, while looking at no one else, and by this interchange of glances and gentle sighs they sought to acquaint each other with their mutual love.

The ball was now about to end with a torch-dance, or, as some style it, a cap-dance. Romeo was invited to join in this by a lady, and after dancing with her he bowed, and, giving the torch to another lady went close to Giulietta and took her by the hand, an act that gave to each inestimable pleasure. Giulietta thus stood between Romeo and another gentleman named Marcuccio, a man of the court, and most agreeable, whose witty, pleasant ways made him a general favourite. He had always got some good story to set the company laughing, while his merriment brought with it harm to none. At all times, in winter or in summer, he had hands as cold and icy as an Alpine glacier, and, though he might warm these for a good while at the fire, they always remained stone cold. With Romeo on her left, Giulietta had Marcuccio on her right, and when she felt the lover take her hand, being possibly desirous to hear him speak, she turned gaily to him and said, with trembling voice, "Blessings attend your coming to my side!" So saying, she pressed his hand lovingly. Romeo, being quick of wit, gently returned the pressure, as he answered, "Lady mine, what blessing is this that you bestow upon me?" Then, with a sweet smile, she said, "Do not marvel, Oh, gentle youth, that I bless your coming here, as Messer Marcuccio has been freezing me for a good while past with his ice-cold hand; but now, all thanks to you, your delicate hand has warmed me." To this Romeo instantly answered, "Lady, whatever service I can do for you will be to me supremely dear,

as to serve you is all that I desire in this world; and I shall count myself happy if you will but deign to command me as you would command the least of your servants. Let me tell you, moreover, that if my hand warms you, the fire of your fair eyes burns all my being, and if you give me no help to endure such heat, it will not be long before you see me entirely consumed and changed to ashes." He had hardly said these words when the torch-dance came to an end, and Giulietta, full of passion, pressed his hand, as with a sigh she said falteringly. "Alas! what can I say but that I am much more yours than mine!"

As all the guests were now departing, Romeo waited to see which way the damsel went; but he soon discovered that she was a daughter of the house, and of this one of his friends assured him who had made inquiry of many of the ladies. The news disconcerted him not a little, as he held it to be a most perilous and difficult matter to attain the end of his amourous desire. But the wound was already open, and had become deeply impregnated with love's subtle poison.

Giulietta, on the other hand, desired to know who the youth was to whose comeliness she had fallen a victim; so she called her nurse aside into a chamber, and stood at a window overlooking the street, which was clearly lighted up by all the torches. Then she began to ask the nurse who this one was, wearing such and such a doublet, or that one with a sword, or the other; and she also asked who the handsome youth might be who carried a mask in his hand. The good old woman, who recognised nearly all of them, told Giulietta the names of each; and she also pointed out Romeo, for him she knew well. At the name Montecchio the damsel was as one stunned, and she despaired of ever getting Romeo for her husband, because of the deadly feud between the two families; nevertheless, outwardly she showed nothing of her discontent. That night she slept little, being full of many thoughts; yet refrain from loving Romeo she could not and would not, so passionately was she enamoured. His exceeding beauty encouraged her; and then again the difficulty and peril of the thing caused her to despair, so that she became a prey to conflicting thoughts, as she said to herself: "Whither shall I let these ungovernable desires of mine transport me? How can I tell, fool that I am, if Romeo loves me? Perhaps the roguish lad only said such words to deceive me, and, having obtained a shameful advantage, would laugh to see me turned into his trull, taking thus his revenge for the feud that grows ever fiercer between his kinsfolk and my own! Yet he is more generous of soul than to betray her who loves, ay, who adores him! If the countenance be the manifest index of the mind, in a form so fair no ruthless heart of iron could dwell; nay, I am prone to think that from a youth so handsome and gentle one could only expect love, courtesy, and kindness. Let us then suppose that, as I would fain believe, he loves me, and would have me for his lawful wife, may I not reasonably think that

to this my father will never consent? Yet who knows that such a match might not engender between the two families perpetual concord and a lasting peace? I have often heard that marriages have made peace not only between private citizens and gentlemen, but frequently between the greatest of princes and kings, cruel wars being followed by true peace and friendship, to the great contentment of all. Perhaps in this way I may bring about a tranquil peace between the two houses."

Being therefore possessed of this thought whenever she saw Romeo pass along the street she always smiled gaily at him, and this greatly rejoiced his heart. No less than hers, his thoughts were at continual strife, now hopeful of mood, and anon despairing. Nevertheless he continued to pass in front of the maiden's house, by day as by night, though it was at his great peril, and Giulietta's kind glances only increased his ardor, and drew him to that particular part of the city. The windows of Giulietta's chamber overlooked a narrow passage, a farm-shed being opposite; and when Romeo passed along the main road, on reaching the top of the passage he often saw the girl at her window, who always smiled and seemed delighted to see him. He often went there at night and stopped in this passage, as it was unfrequented, and also because, if he stood opposite Giulietta's window, he could sometimes hear her speak. He being there one night, Giulietta, either because she heard him or for some other reason, opened her casement, when he withdrew to the shed, but not before she recognised him, for with her splendour the moon had made all the roadway bright. Being alone in her chamber, she softly called to him and said: "What are you doing here at this hour alone? If they should catch you here, alas, what would become of you? Do you not know how cruel is the enmity that exists between your house and ours, and how many thereby have met their death? Of a truth you will be ruthlessly slain, and thus to you mortal hurt, and to me dishonour, will ensue."

"Lady mine," replied Romeo, "it is the love that I cherish for you which brings me here at this hour, nor do I doubt that if your folk found me they would try to kill me, albeit, so far as my feeble powers would let me, I should endeavour to do my duty; and though overwhelmed by numbers, I would make every effort not to die alone. Indeed, if in this amorous enterprise I needs must perish, what death more fortunate could befall me than to die near you? Never, methinks, may it happen that I shall be the cause of putting the least stain upon your honor, for with my own blood I shall ever strive to keep it, as now it is, bright and fair. But if you held my life as dear as I hold yours, you would remove all these barriers and make me the happiest man alive." "Then what would you have me do?" said Giulietta. And Romeo answered, "I would have you love me as I love you, and let me come into your chamber, so that with greater ease and less danger I may show you the magnitude of my love, and all the bitter pain that perpetually I suffer for your sake."

Vexed somewhat at hearing this, Giulietta in confusion answered: "Romeo, you know your love, and I know mine, and I know moreover that I love you as deeply as any one may love another — perhaps more than befits my honour. But let me say that if you are minded to enjoy me without the holy bond of matrimony you are very greatly mistaken, and we may nowise agree. Knowing, as I do, that if you visit this neighbourhood too often you may easily meet with certain evil folk, when I should never be happy again, I conclude that, if you would be mine, as I would be yours for ever, you must make me your lawful wife. If you wed me I shall always be ready to come to whatever place you please. But if some other fancy fills your head, begone about your business and leave me in peace."

At these words, Romeo, who wished for nothing better, gaily replied that this was his one and only desire, and that whenever it pleased her he would espouse her in whatever way she should appoint. "This is well," added Giulietta, "but, that our marriage be celebrated in orderly fashion, I would have it solemnised in the presence of the reverend Friar Lorenzo da Reggio, my spiritual father." To this they agreed, and it was decided that on the following day Romeo should speak to the friar about the matter, as he was on intimate terms with him.

Friar Lorenzo belonged to the Minor Brotherhood, a master in theology, a great philosopher, and a skilled expert in many things, including chemistry and magic. As the worthy friar desired to keep up his good reputation with the people and also enjoy such pleasures as he was minded to take, he sought to do his business as cautiously as possible. To provide against every emergency, he always endeavoured to get the support of some nobleman of high repute. Among other friends whose favour he enjoyed in Verona, he had Romeo's father, a gentleman of great credit whom every one highly esteemed. He firmly believed the friar to be a most holy man, and Romeo was also much attached to him, being beloved by Fra Lorenzo in return as a prudent and courageous youth. Not only with the Montecchi but also with the Capelletti he was on terms of close friendship and he confessed most of the nobility of Verona, the men as well as the women.

Romeo, having decided to do this took leave of Giulietta and returned home. When morning came he went to the convent of San Francesco and told the friar of his fortunate love, and what he and Giulietta had determined to do. Hearing this, Fra Lorenzo promised to do all that he wished, as he could deny him nothing, and also because he felt sure that he could make peace between the Capelletti and the Montecchi and win greater favour with Signor Bartolomeo Scala, who was most desirous that the two houses should be reconciled, so that all strife in the city might cease. The two lovers therefore waited for an opportunity of confessing themselves in order to carry out their plan.

It was the time of Lent, and to make matters safer Giulietta resolved to confide in her old nurse, who slept with her in the same chamber. Profiting by an opportunity, she told the good woman the whole story of her love. However much the beldame chid her and bade her desist from such an enterprise, this had no effect, so that at length she acquiesced, and Giulietta prevailed upon her to carry a letter to Romeo. When the lover read what was written therein, he felt as if he were the happiest man in the world, for in the letter Giulietta asked him to come and speak with her at her chamber window at the fifth hour of the night, and bring a rope-ladder with him. Romeo had a trusty serving-man, whom he had often trusted with matters of importance, and had ever found him prompt and loyal. Telling him of his design, he charged him to procure the rope-ladder, and when everything was ready, set out at the time fixed with Pietro, for so the servant was named. He found Giulietta waiting for him, who on recognising him let down the cord which she had prepared, and they drew up the ladder, which, with the nurse's help, she fixed firmly to the iron grating, and then waited for her lover to come up. He boldly climbed up, while Pietro withdrew to the shed opposite. On getting up to the window, Romeo talked to Giulietta through the iron grating, the bars of which were so close together that a hand was hardly able to pass through them. After loving greetings, Giulietta said to him: "Signor mine, dearer to me than the light of my eyes, I sent for you to tell you that I have arranged with my mother to go to confession next Friday, in the sermon-hour. Inform Fra Lorenzo, so that he may have all things ready." Romeo replied that he had already told the friar, who was disposed to do all that they wished. When they had talked a while further of their loves, Romeo let himself down by the ladder and returned home with Pietro.

Giulietta became straightway very glad of heart, and every hour before she could wed her Romeo was to her as a thousand years. Romeo, for his part, felt just as gay and full of spirits, as he talked with his servant of it all. When Friday came, Madame Giovanna, Giulietta's mother, took her daughter and serving-women, and went to the San Francesco convent; and on entering the church she asked for Fra Lorenzo. The friar had already taken Romeo into his cell where he heard confessions, and had locked him in. Then he went to Madame Giovanna, who said to him: "Father, I came to confess myself betimes, and I have also brought Giulietta with me, for I know that all the day you will be busy hearing the many confessions of your spiritual sons and daughters." Giving them his blessing, the friar passed into the convent and entered the confessional where Romeo was, while Giulietta followed as the first to present herself for confession.

When she had entered, and closed the door, she made a sign to the friar that she was within. He then raised the wicket, and after the usual greetings said: "My daughter, Romeo tells me that you have consented to take

him as your husband, and that he is minded to make you his wife. Are you both still so disposed?" The lovers answered that this was all that they desired, whereupon the friar, after saying certain things in praise of holy matrimony, pronounced those words which the Church has ordained to be spoken at marriages, and Romeo then gave his dear Giulietta the ring, much to their mutual delight. They arranged to meet that night, and after kissing each other through the opening of the wicket, Romeo cautiously quitted the cell and the convent, and gaily went about his business. The friar closed the grating so that it might seem as if nothing had been removed, and then heard the glad maiden's confession, as well as that of her mother and the serving-women.

When night had come, at the hour fixed, Romeo went with Pietro to a certain garden. Helped by the latter he climbed the wall, and let himself down into the garden, where he found his bride waiting for him with the nurse. On seeing Giulietta, he went to meet her with outstretched arms. Giulietta did the same, and, winding her arms about his neck, she remained for a while speechless—overcome, as it were, by such supreme delight, while her ardent lover was filled with a like rapture, and it seemed to him that never before had he tasted pleasure such as this. In mutual kisses then they took infinite, unspeakable delight, and, withdrawing to a corner of the garden where there was a bench, they then and there consummated the marriage.

After much delicious dalliance, Romeo and his lovely bride made arrangements for a future meeting, resolving to discover what Messer Antonio would say with regard to the union and the making of peace. Then, after kissing his dear wife a thousand times, Romeo left the garden, saying joyfully to himself. "What man is there alive more happy than myself? Who is there that shall equal me in love? Or who ever possessed so fair and winsome a damsel as mine?" Nor did Giulietta deem herself less fortunate, since to her it seemed impossible that any youth could be found who in beauty, courtesy, and gracious bearing might equal her Romeo; and she anxiously waited until things might be so arranged that she could freely enjoy him without fear. Thus, on some days they met, while on others they forbore.

Meantime Fra Lorenzo tried all he could to effect a peace between the Montecchi and the Capelletti, and had brought matters to such a likely pass that he hoped to make the secret alliance a source of satisfaction to both parties. But at Easter-time it happened that several men of the Capelletti faction fell in with others of the Montecchi near the Borsari Gate facing Castel Vecchio, and, being armed, they fiercely attacked them. Among the Capelletti was Tebaldo, Giulietta's first cousin, a stalwart youth who urged his comrades to give the Montecchi a sound thrashing and respect no one. The scuffle grew fiercer, when each side was reinforced with men and arms; so furious indeed became the fighters, that, recking nothing, they dealt each other grievous wounds.

Suddenly Romeo appeared upon the scene who besides his henchmen had certain young fellows with him, who accompanied him in a jaunt about the city. Seeing his kinsmen fighting with the Capelletti he was greatly troubled, for he knew of the friar's scheme for peace, and felt doubly desirous that no dispute should arise. Therefore, to calm the disturbance, he called out to his comrades and servants, being heard by many others in the street: "Brothers, let us part these fellows, and see to it that, at all costs, the fray goes no further, but compel them to lay down their arms." Then he endeavoured to separate the combatants, while his friends did likewise, and tried their best by words and deeds to stop the fight. It was a vain attempt, however, the fury of either side having now reached such a pitch that blows fell thick and fast.

Two or three men had already fallen when Tebaldo, coming sideways at Romeo, dealt him a lusty stroke in the flank; but as he wore a corselett of mail, he was not wounded, as the blade could not pierce it. Then, turning towards Tebaldo, he said in friendly fashion: "Tebaldo, you are in great error if you think that I have come to pick a quarrel with you or with your people. I happened to be here by chance, and have tried to get my men away, being desirous that we should live like peaceful citizens. Therefore I beg you to do the same with your fellows, so that no further scandal ensue, for there has been bloodshed enough already."

Nearly all present heard these words spoken, but Tebaldo, either not understanding or not choosing to understand them, rushed wildly at Romeo to strike him on the head, crying out, "Traitor! you are a dead man!" Romeo wore gauntlets of mail, and, wrapping his cloak round his left arm, held this up to protect his head, and, turning the point of his sword towards his adversary, he ran him right through the throat, piercing it again and again, so that Tebaldo instantly fell, dead. Then there was a great outcry, and as the officers of the court now came up the combatants escaped, some this way, and others that. Grieved beyond measure that he had killed Tebaldo, Romeo, with several of his folk, went to San Francesco, and hid himself in Fra Lorenzo's chamber. The good friar, at the news of young Tebaldo's death, was in despair, for he feared that now there would be no means of removing the hatred between the two families. The Capelletti in a body went to Signor Bartolomeo, the Governor, to lodge a complaint, while the Montecchi sought to defend Romeo, as there were many who could testify to his forbearance until Tebaldo attacked him. Thus either party argued hotly before Signor Bartolomeo. As it was proved that the Capelletti had been the assailants, while to Romeo's pacifying words several trustworthy citizens bore witness, the Governor made all of them lay down their arms, and banished Romeo from Verona.

In the house of the Capelletti there was great mourning for the death of their Tebaldo, while Giulietta's tears fell without ceasing, not for the loss of her cousin, but because all hope had vanished of the alliance, and she

grieved greatly and bemoaned her fate, as she could not conceive how the thing would end. Learning through Fra Lorenzo where Romeo was, she wrote him a most sorrowful letter and sent it to the friar by her old nurse. She knew that Romeo had been banished and that he must instantly quit Verona, so she affectionately besought him to let her go with him. Romeo wrote back cheering words and bade her be patient, as in time he would make everything right. He had not yet determined to what place he would go, but he would stay as near Verona as possible, and before leaving he would make every effort to meet her once more, and speak with her in whatever place was most convenient to herself.

As the least dangerous spot, she chose the garden in which she had passed her wedding-night; and accordingly at the time fixed Romeo, armed, came out of the convent, and, with his trusty servant Pietro, went to the garden, where Giulietta received him with floods of tears. For a while they were silent, unable to speak a word, drinking, as they kissed, each other's tears, and mourning bitterly for this sudden separation and all the adversities of fate. As the time for parting drew near, Giulietta fervently besought her husband to take her with him, saying, "Dear my lord, I will cut off these locks of mine and don a page's dress, and wherever you please to go, there will I always come too, and lovingly do your behests. What more faithful servant could you have than I? Oh, my own dear husband, grant me this boon, and let your fortune be my fortune also, that what befalls you may befall me likewise!" With tender words Romeo sought to comfort her as best he might, assuring her that it was his firm belief that ere long his sentence of banishment would be revoked, as of this the Prince had already given his father some hope. Moreover, if he took her with him, it should not be in the garb of a page, but as his bride and his wife, whom he would see honourably attended as befitted her rank. His term of banishment, so he said, would not exceed a year, and if meanwhile no friendly truce were established between the factions, the Lord of Verona would see to it that at all hazards, and whether they wished it or not, they did become reconciled. Nay, if the matter were protracted overmuch, he would go over to the other side, since he could not live long without his Giulietta. Then he told her to send him news of herself by letter, and said much else to comfort her, but Giulietta was inconsolable, and could only weep. Now, as the lights of dawn showed faint in the east, the sorrowing lovers kissed and embraced each other as before with many tears and sighs, then said farewell.

Romeo returned to the convent, while Giulietta went back to her chamber; and two or three days later, having laid his plans, he left Verona disguised as a merchant, having trusty companions about him, with whom he travelled in safety to Mantua. Here he took a house, for his father kept him supplied with money, and provided in every way for his honourable maintenance.

All day, and every day, Giulietta wept and sighed, scarcely eating or sleeping, her nights being as unrestful as her days. Noticing her daughter's grief, Giulietta's mother often questioned her as to its cause, telling her that it was time to cease such sorrowing and that she had mourned overmuch for her cousin's death. Giulietta said that she did not know what ailed her, and whenever she could escape from the company she gave vent to her grief with tears, so that she grew thin and sad, and all unlike the lovely Giulietta that once she was. Romeo kept her comforted by frequent letters, always giving her hope that soon they would be together again. He urgently besought her to be of good cheer and to let merriment dispel her melancholy, as all things were working together for good. Vain, however, was such counsel, as, without Romeo she could get no cure for all her grief.

The mother thought that the girl's chagrin came from a desire to have a husband, as some of her companions had recently been married. Possessed by this idea, she told her lord of it, and said, "Husband, our daughter Giulietta leads a most miserable life, for she does nothing but weep and sigh, and, whenever she can, she shuns the society of every one. I have often asked her the reason of this sorrowing, and, indeed, have closely watched her on all sides to try and discover it, but I have never succeeded. She always has the same answer, to wit, that she does not know what ails her, while all the servants shrug their shoulders and say they cannot tell. Some grievous passion of a truth torments her, and it is evident that she is wasting away as wax before the fire. Of the thousand reasons that I have imagined, one alone remains in my mind, and it is this — I greatly suspect that her grief comes from the fact that, last Carnival-time, some of her girl companions were married, while there is no talk of finding a husband for her. This next feast of Saint Euphemia she will be eighteen, so, husband mine, I thought I would say a word to you about it, as it seems to me that the time has come for you to find her a worthy and honourable husband, and not let her remain longer unwed, for she's hardly the sort of goods to keep by us at home."

Messer Antonio thought his wife's speech apt enough, and he replied: "Since you could make nothing, wife, of our daughter's melancholy, and as you think she ought to have a husband, I will do my best to get her one that shall in all respects be worthy of our house. Meanwhile, do you try and find out if she be in love, and let her say who the husband is that she prefers." Madame Giovanna declared that she would do all in her power, and make fresh inquiries of her daughter, and of others about the house. However, she could learn nothing.

Just at this time Messer Antonio's choice happened to fall upon the Count Paris di Lodrone, a very handsome and very rich young man, about twenty-four or twenty-five years of age. There seemed good hope of successfully arranging the match, and Messer Antonio told his wife of this.

Thinking such an alliance most desirable, she in turn told Giulietta, who at the news became as one beside herself with grief. Perceiving this, Madame Giovanna was much annoyed, not knowing the cause of her daughter's discontent.

After much arguing, she said: "Well daughter mine, as I take it, you wish for no husband;" to which Giulietta answered, "No, mother, I do not desire to wed; and, if you love me or care for me, never talk to me about a husband." "What do you want, then," rejoined her mother, "if you will not have a husband? Will you be a nun? Tell me frankly what you wish." Giulietta said that she did not want to be a nun; all that she desired was to die. At this answer the mother was filled with amazement and displeasure, and she knew neither what to say nor what to do. Those of the household were equally surprised, and could only affirm that ever since her cousin's death Giulietta had been exceedingly sorrowful, weeping incessantly, and never showing herself at the windows. Having heard all from his wife, Messer Antonio sent for his daughter, and after some expostulation said: "My daughter, as you are now at a marriageable age, I have found a noble, rich, and handsome husband for you in the Count di Lodrone, therefore do as I bid you and get you ready to accept him, for it is seldom that matches as honourable as this are made." Hereupon, with more courage than befits a girl, Giulietta frankly answered that she did not wish to be married. The father was greatly incensed, and in his choler came near to striking her.

However, he only sharply scolded her with many harsh words, finally telling her that, whether she liked it or not, she must make up her mind in three or four days to go with her mother and other kinsfolk to Villafranca where Count Paris and his companions intended to visit her. Moreover she must show no further opposition to this plan, if she did not wish him to break her head, and make of her the sorriest daughter that had ever been born. Giulietta's discomfiture may well be imagined; in sooth she was as if struck by some fiery thunderbolt. Upon recovering herself, she let Romeo know everything, by means of Fra Lorenzo. Romeo wrote back bidding her be of good courage, as in a short while he would come and take her away with him to Mantua. So she was forced to go to Villafranca, where her father had a very beautiful estate. She went just as gaily as convicts go to crucifixion or the gallows. Count Paris, who was there, saw her in church at mass, and, albeit haggard, pale, and sad of mien, she pleased him; so he came to Verona, where the marriage was concluded with Messer Antonio. Giulietta also returned to Verona, when her father told her that the marriage contract had been signed, and exhorted her to be cheerful. Struggling to show a brave front, she kept back the tears that rose in torrents to her eyes, as answer she made none. The wedding, so she learnt, was fixed for the middle of next September; so not knowing where to turn for help, she decided to go herself and see Fra Lorenzo, and take counsel with him as to how she might escape from these nuptials.

The festival of the glorious Assumption of the ever blessed Virgin, Mother of our Redeemer, now drew near, when Giulietta, profiting by the chance, went to her mother and said: "I neither know nor can I imagine the source of this deep melancholy that thus oppresses me, yet ever since Tebaldo's death I have never been happy, and it would seem that I am getting worse, since nothing serves to cheer me. Therefore, at this blessed Feast of the Assumption, I would fain attend confession, as perhaps in this way I shall gain some comfort in my tribulation. Sweet my mother, what say you? Do you think that I should do so? If there be some other road that in your opinion I ought to take, I pray you show it to me, since in my own mind nothing seems clear to me."

Madame Giovanna, being a good soul and very religious, was glad to hear of her daughter's intention, and highly commended her for it. Accordingly they went together to San Francesco, to see Fra Lorenzo. When he had entered the confessional, Giulietta, going in at the opposite side, presented herself before him and said: "Holy Father, no one better than you yourself knows what has transpired between my husband and myself, so there is no need for me to repeat it here. You will also remember to have read the letter that I forwarded through you to Romeo, in which I told him that my father had made me the affianced bride of Count Paris di Lodrone. Romeo wrote back that he would come and save me, but God only knows when that will be. Now as matters stand, they have decided to have the wedding next September, and as the time draws near, I see no way to escape from this Lodrone, who should rather be called *ladrone* (thief) and assassin, since he would steal the property of another. Father, I have therefore come to you for counsel and help. These words that Romeo writes, 'I will come and set things right,' are not enough to get me out of the trap. I am Romeo's wife, with whom I have consummated marriage, and I can never be another's; nay, even if I could, I would not, for I mean to be his, and his eternally. Your help, then, and your counsel are what I need. Listen to what I thought of doing. I want you, father, to procure me a boy's dress with doublet and hose, so that, thus clad, I may leave Verona late one evening or early one morning. No one will recognise me, and I can go straight away to Mantua, to my Romeo's house."

When the friar heard this imprudent plan, he was little pleased thereat, and said: "My daughter, this scheme of yours cannot be carried out, for you would run too great a risk. A damsel so tenderly nurtured as yourself could not bear the fatigue of such a journey, for you are not used to travel on foot, nor do you know the way, so that you would wander about hither and thither. As soon as your father discovered your absence from home, he would send spies to all the gates of the city and along all the main roads of the country round about; and without a doubt they would soon find you. When you had been brought home, your father

would want to know the reason for your escaping thus in the dress of a man. How you would bear their threats and ill-usage I know not, and in your luckless endeavour to reach Romeo you would lose all hope of ever seeing him again.

At the friar's sagacious words, Giulietta grew calmer, and she replied: "Since my plan does not seem to you a good one, Father, and as I have full belief in you, pray give me your advice, and show me how to cut the hateful knot that binds me, so that possibly with less peril I may rejoin my Romeo, for I cannot live without him. And if you can help me in no other way, prevent me at least from becoming another's, if Romeo's I may not be. He told me of your fame as a distiller of herbs and other things, and that you prepare a water which, without causing any pain, can kill a man in a couple of hours. Give me some of this; enough to free me from the hands of that *ladrone*, seeing that to restore me to Romeo is out of your power. Loving me as I know he loves me, he will be content that I should die rather than fall alive into the hands of others. Moreover you will save me and my house from grievous shame, and if there be no other way to rescue me from this tempestuous sea, on which I drift as some wrecked and rudderless bark, I swear it, that some night with a keen-edged dagger, in a frenzy, I will slit open the veins of my throat, being resolved to die rather than remain untrue to Romeo."

The friar was a great experimentalist, who in his day had travelled in various countries, delighting to gather new knowledge. He was specially well acquainted with the virtues residing in herbs and minerals, being one of the most famous distillers of the time. Among other sleep-giving preparations, he made a paste, which afterwards he reduced to a very fine powder of truly marvellous efficacy. For, if dissolved in a little water, whoever drank it fell asleep in less than half an hour, and the draught had such a calming effect upon the vital forces that there was no physician, however famous or expert, who would not declare the drinker of it to be dead — a delicious death, lasting sometimes forty hours and sometimes more, according to the bodily temperament of those who took the draught. When the powder had done its work, the man or the woman awoke just as from some long calm, restful sleep; and it caused them no harm whatever.

Now when the friar heard the disconsolate damsel's resolve, from sheer pity he was like to weep as he replied: "See now, my daughter, you must not talk of dying, for of a surety if once you die you will not return until the Judgment Day, when all the dead shall be raised together. I would have you think of living as long as it shall please God, for He gave you life and He preserves it, and, when it seems to Him good, He takes it back again. Thus put away from you such melancholy thoughts. You are young, and must endeavour to live and enjoy your Romeo. We will find some remedy for it all, never fear. In this magnificent city, as you

see, I am held by all in high repute, yet if folk should discover that I knew of your marriage, it would bring me infinite harm and shame. And if I gave you poison, what then? I have none, but if I had, I would not give you any, because it would be to sin grievously against God, and also because I should utterly lose my credit. Nevertheless, O my daughter, I will gladly do all I can for you, so that you may remain Romeo's bride, and not become the wife of this Lodrone. Nor shall you die; but it behoves us to act so that no one shall know of the matter. You, for your part, must be resolute and brave, and determine to do as I bid you, though this shall not cause you the least harm. Listen, then, to what I mean you to do."

Then the friar showed the damsel his sleeping-powder and explained to her its virtues, and that he had often tried it, but had never found it fail in its effect.

"My daughter," said he, "this powder is so precious that it will give you a harmless sleep, and all the time you thus quietly rest, if Galen, Hippocrates, Messue, Avicenna, and all the most famous physicians past and present were to see you and feel your pulse, with one voice they would all declare you to be dead. And when the powder has done its work, you will awake as healthy and as fresh as when at morning you leave your couch. At the first signs of dawn you must drink the potion, when you will gradually fall asleep, and when the hour for rising comes your kinsfolk will endeavour to wake you, but in vain. Your pulse will have ceased to beat, and you will be as cold as ice. When summoned, doctors and relatives will one and all pronounce you dead, and at evening time you will be buried in the vault of the Capelletti. There, at your ease, you will rest for a night and a day, and the next night Romeo and I will come to take you hence (for meanwhile I shall inform him of our plan by special messenger), and he will secretly convey you to Mantua and keep you there in hiding, until this blessed peace be concluded between your house and his. If you cannot adopt this course, I do not see how I can help you in any other way. But, as I have said, see to it that you keep the matter secret and to yourself, or you will spoil things for both of us."

Giulietta, who to find Romeo would have gone into a fiery furnace, to say nothing of a sepulchre, implicitly believed all that the friar said, and without another thought consented to his proposal, saying, "Father, I will do all that you tell me, and I place myself in your hands. Never fear that I shall say aught of the thing to any one, for I will keep it a profound secret."

Then the friar hurried back to his room, and brought the damsel a small spoonful of the powder, which he wrapped up in a piece of paper. Giulietta put this in her wallet, and thanked Fra Lorenzo many times, who could scarcely believe that a girl should have such courage and assurance as to let herself be shut up in a tomb with the dead, and he said to her: "Say,

now, my daughter, shall you not be afraid of your cousin Tebaldo, who was but lately killed, and who lies in the vault where you will be placed? By this time he must stink horribly." "My father," replied the intrepid damsel, "fear nothing on that score, for if by suffering the grievous torments of hell I thought I should find Romeo, for me the eternal fire would have no terrors." "So be it, then," answered the friar, "in the name of our Lord God."

Giulietta then joyfully returned to her mother, and as they went home together she said: "Mother dearest, of a truth Fra Lorenzo is a most holy man. With his sweet and pious counsel he has given me such comfort that he has almost dispelled the deep melancholy that oppressed me, and so devoutly did he discourse to me upon the subject of my ailment, that nothing better nor more apt can be imagined." Madame Giovanna noticed that her daughter was more than usually gay, and, hearing this, her joy knew no bounds as she replied, "God bless you, my dearest daughter! Right glad am I to think that you have begun to be of good cheer, and for this we are greatly beholden to our spiritual father. We must be good to him and help him with our alms, for the monastery is poor, and each day he says a prayer to God for us. Bear him often in mind, and send him some goodly alms."

Madame Giovanna really believed that Giulietta by this apparent gaiety had got rid of her melancholy, so she told this to her husband, who shared her satisfaction thereat, and they both ceased to suspect that she was love-sick for some one, believing that her grief had arisen from her cousin's death, or from some other strange cause. Indeed she seemed over young to marry, and, if they could have done so with honour, they would willingly have kept her yet for two or three years before getting her a husband. But the contract with the Count was already concluded, and this could not be undone without scandal. A day for the marriage was accordingly fixed, and rich dresses and jewels were got ready for Giulietta to wear. She continued to seem light-hearted and gay, laughing and joking with all, while every hour seemed to her as a thousand years, before that one came for her to drink the potion.

On the evening which preceded the Sunday fixed for her wedding day, the damsel, saying nothing to any one, placed a goblet filled with water at the head of her bed. This was not noticed by her nurse. That night she hardly slept at all, being full of thoughts, and when the dawn drew near, at which time she was to drink the potion, she pictured Tebaldo to herself as she had seen him, with all the blood streaming from a gash in his throat. She thought how she would have to lie beside him, perhaps upon him, and that in the vault there were many mouldering bodies and bare bones. The fear of it sent a cold shiver through her frame, her every hair stood on end, and for sheer terror she trembled like a leaf in the gale. An icy sweat overspread her limbs, and it seemed to her on a

sudden as if she were being torn into pieces by the sheeted dead in that tomb. Then, her fears giving place to courage, she said to herself: "Alas! what is this that I am about to do? Where am I going to let them put me? How shall I bear the noisome stench of Tebaldo's rotting corpse, when at home the least evil smell is unendurable to me? Who knows if some serpent or a thousand other hideous reptiles be not in the tomb—vermin abhorred and loathed by me? If courage fails me to look at them, how shall I bear to have them about me and to feel them touch me? Have I not often heard them say what fearful things happen at night, not only in tombs but also in churches and graveyards?"

This grim fancy brought to her imagination a thousand others more grisly still, and she half determined not to take the powder—in fact, she very nearly scattered it about the floor, being distraught by many strange and conflicting thoughts, some prompting her to take it, and others to reflect upon the hideous perils that would surround her if she did. However, at the last, as the dawn peered forth from her orient balcony, being spurred thereto by her fervent and vivid love for Romeo, which only grew greater in all this trouble, she boldly drank off the potion at a draught: and, lying down, she soon fell asleep.

The old nurse, being in bed with her, had noticed that the girl scarcely slept all night, but she never saw her drink the potion, and, rising, went about her household duties as usual. When the time came for Giulietta to wake the old crone came back to the room, crying, "Get up, get up! It is time to rise!" and she threw open the windows. Seeing that Giulietta never moved nor made the least sign of rising, she shook her, saying, "Get up, slug-a-bed, get up!" But the good old woman's words fell upon deaf ears. So she began to shake Giulietta as hard as she could, pulling her by the nose and pinching her, but all her efforts were in vain. The powder had so frozen and fettered her vital spirits that not the loudest, most appalling thunderclaps in the world could have roused her with their tremendous clamour. The old nurse, being horrified to find that the girl was as senseless as a corpse, believed she must be dead, and, weeping bitterly, she ran to find Madame Giovanna, to whom, half hindered by sobs, she cried breathlessly: "Madam, your daughter is dead." The mother rushed, weeping, to the room, and when she found her daughter in this state, needless to say, she was almost overwhelmed with grief. Up to the stars rose her grievous lamentations; they would have touched stones to pity, or softened savage tigers when most wrathful at the loss of their whelps.

The women's cries were now heard all over the house, and everyone ran to the bedchamber. Giulietta's father came with the rest, and when he found his girl cold as ice, without any visible sign of life, he was fain to die of grief. The news spread quickly, and soon the whole city heard of it. Friends and kinsfolk flocked straightway to the house, and the more they came the greater grew the general lamentation. The most famous physi-

cians of the city were instantly summoned, who applied all their most efficacious remedies, but without effect. Then, hearing what life the girl had led for several days, and that during this time she had done nothing but weep and sigh, they all with one opinion declared that she had died suffocated by intense grief. This only served to redouble the universal sorrowing, as all Verona bewailed so cruel and so unforeseen a death; but more than they all the mother mourned, refusing to take any comfort whatever. Three times when embracing her daughter she fainted, and herself seemed like a corpse so that grief followed grief, and sorrow was added unto sorrow. All the women about her strove as best they might to console her, but she had given reins to her grief in such a way, and had let herself be so transported thereby, that in despair she understood nothing of all that was said to her. All that she did was to weep and to sigh, screaming and tearing her hair like one demented. Messer Antonio was as greatly distressed as she, though he gave less vent to his grief in tears.

That morning Fra Lorenzo wrote a long letter to Romeo, informing him of the potion scheme and of what had occurred; telling him also that on the following night he would go and bring Giulietta out of the tomb and take her back to his chamber. Romeo must therefore endeavour to come disguised to Verona, and he would wait for him until midnight on the following day, and then they would adopt such measures as might seem to them best. The letter being written and sealed, Fra Lorenzo gave it to a trustworthy friar, with strict injunctions to set out for Mantua that very day and find Romeo Montecchio. To him he was to deliver the letter, but to no other person, whoever he might be.

The friar started off and reached Mantua early in the day, dismounting at the Franciscan convent. Having put up his horse, he asked the Father Superior to let him have a companion to take him about the city and help him to do his business. But he discovered that shortly before one of the friars of this convent had died, and there was just a suspicion that his death was due to the plague. The health officers unanimously declared him a victim to this disease, and they were the more certain of this because in his groin was found a tumour much bigger than an egg — proof positive that he had died of this pestilent malady. So it chanced that just as the Veronese friar was asking for a companion, the health officers arrived and ordered the Father Superior under grave penalties to let no one go forth from the convent. The friar protested that he had only just arrived from Verona, and had not associated with any one in the convent. But his protests were vain, and he was perforce obliged to remain there with the other friars, so that he never gave that blessed letter to Romeo, nor sent him any message which brought about the direst evil and scandal, as you shall hear anon.

Meanwhile in Verona they prepared solemn funeral obsequies for the

damsel whom all believed to be dead, and they decided that the burial should take place late that evening. On hearing of Giulietta's death, Pietro, Romeo's servant, was filled with consternation, and he decided to go to Mantua, but after the funeral; so that he might tell his master that he had actually seen her dead. He resolved to start from Verona and ride all night, reaching Mantua when the gates were opened. Accordingly, at late evening, amid the grief of the whole city, Giulietta was borne on a bier towards San Francesco, the pomp of her train being swelled by all the clerical and civic dignitaries of Verona. Distress at the sad event had so dazed Pietro, who knew how passionately his master loved the girl, that he never thought of speaking to Fra Lorenzo, as he usually did. Had he seen the friar, he would have heard about the sleeping draught, and, by telling Romeo, would have averted all the ills that ensued. Being well assured that it was Giulietta whom they carried on the bier, he mounted his horse and rode at a good rate to Villafranca, where he stopped a while for rest and refreshment. Then, starting again two hours before daybreak, he reached Mantua at sunrise, and went to his master's house.

Let us now go back to Verona. When the damsel had been brought into the church and over her bier the customary solemn service for the dead had been chanted, about the midmost hour of the night she was laid in the vault. This was of marble and very spacious, being situated in the graveyard outside the church, one side of it touching the wall, with an enclosed space adjoining, where, when another corpse was laid in the vault, the bones of those previously interred were flung. When the vault was opened, Fra Lorenzo dragged Tebaldo's body to one side of it, and after it had been swept and made clean he had the damsel gently placed therein, with a little pillow at her head. Then he closed the tomb.

On reaching the house, Pietro found his master in bed, and for grievous sobs and tears could say not a word when presenting himself before him. This greatly astonished Romeo, who, thinking of ills other than those which had actually occurred, said: "How now, Pietro? What is amiss? What news do you bring me from Verona? How goes it with my father and the rest of our family? Speak, nor keep me longer in suspense. What can it be that grieves you thus? Quick, tell me!"

Then Pietro, giving vent to his emotion, in broken accents told him of Giulietta's death, and how he himself had seen her borne to the sepulchre, her death, as they said, being due to grief. The dread news nearly drove Romeo out of his mind, and, leaping from his bed in a frenzy, he cried: "Ah! traitorous Romeo, perfidious, disloyal, and of all men most ungrateful! Not grief it is that has slain your lady love, for of grief one dies not, but it is you, cruel man, you that have been her executioner; you have been her assassin; you have done her to death! She herself

wrote to you that she would die rather than become another's bride, and besought you to take her away at all hazards from her father's house. But you, ungrateful one, laggard in love, and wretched mongrel that you are, you gave her your word that you would go and do everything, and bade her be of good cheer, while from day to day you put it off, never resolving to do her will. Now you have chosen to stay with your hands at your girdle; and Giulietta is dead. Dead she is; and you are alive! Oh! traitor, how often did you write it to her, and with your own lips tell her that you could not live without her! But you are living at this moment. Where, think you, is she? There in twilight beyond the grave she wanders, waiting for you to follow, as to herself she exclaims: 'Ah, what a liar, what a false lover and faithless husband is this! for at the news of my death he yet can bear to remain alive!' Forgive me, oh, forgive me, my own dearest wife, for I confess my very grievous sin. As, however, my immeasurable grief may not for all its poignancy deprive me of life, myself I will do its work, and slay myself with mine own hand!"

Then he grasped the sword hanging near the bed's head, and, wrenching it from its scabbard, set the point of the blade at his heart. But Pietro was quick enought to prevent him from wounding himself, and disarmed him in a trice, snatching the sword from his hand, as, like a faithful servant, he respectfully chid his master for such madness, bidding him take comfort and live, as the dead girl was beyond all human help. The dreadful news had so stupefied Romeo, that, as it were, he became like stone, or marble, while never a tear fell from his eyes. Looking at him, one might have thought it was a statue, not a man. But ere long tears came in torrents, and then he resembled a fountain where water welled in abundance. And the words that, thus weeping, he uttered, might have moved pity in the hearts of barbarians, however hard or adamantine these might be. When the first bitterness of his grief was spent, Romeo, swayed by passion, began to give way to evil and desperate thoughts, and, since his darling Giulietta was dead, he determined nowise to remain alive. But of this dire intent he said not a word, hiding what was in his mind, so that by no servant nor another he might be hindered from carrying out his scheme. To Pietro, who was with him in the room, he gave injunctions to say nothing to any one of Giulietta's death, but bade him get two fresh horses saddled, as he was going back to Verona.

"I want you," said he, "to go on first, as fast as you can, saying nothing to any one, and when you reach Verona do not tell my father that I am coming; but try and get picks and other iron tools necessary for opening the vault in which my wife is buried. For I shall arrive at Verona late to-night and will go straight to your cottage at the back of our orchard. About the third or fourth hour of the night we will go to the graveyard, for I would fain look once more upon my hapless wife as she lies there,

dead. Then, all unrecognized, I will quit Verona betimes, you following me a little way after; and we will both return hither."

Accordingly, soon after this Pietro started, and Romeo wrote a letter to his father, asking pardon for marrying without his permission, setting forth in full the story of his love and of his marriage. He also tenderly besought him to have a solemn service for the dead said at Giulietta's grave, as if it were for his daughter-in-law, and make this service a perpetual one by endowing it with the revenues which he (Romeo) possessed, as certain property had come to him from an aunt who, dying, had made him her heir. For Pietro also Romeo made such provision that he could live in ease without depending upon others for support. These two things he most urgently requested of his father, declaring it to be his last wish, and, as his aunt had died a few days before, he begged his father to give the first-fruits of her property to the poor. Sealing this letter, he put it in his bosom, and, taking a phial full of deadly poison, he dressed himself like a German and mounted his horse, telling the folk of his house that next day he would soon return.

So he set out for Verona, travelling at great speed, and got there at the hour of the *Ave Maria*. He at once went to look for Pietro, who was at home, and had done all that he had been told to do. About the fourth hour of the night they both started for San Francesco, taking all necessary tools with them, and on reaching Giulietta's tomb they adroitly opened it, and propped up the lid. Romeo had told Pietro to bring a dark lantern with him, which helped them not a little in their work. Entering the tomb, Romeo saw his darling wife lying there, to all appearance cold and dead. At the sight he swooned, and sank down at her side overcome with grief. Then, recovering himself, he tenderly kissed and and embraced her, bathing her face with scalding tears, as sobs choked his utterance. But after a long spell of weeping he found his voice, and spoke words that must have touched the hardest of hard hearts to pity.

As he had resolved to be quit of life, he took the phial containing the poison, and putting it to his lips drained it at one draught.

Then he called to Pietro, who kept watch in a corner of the graveyard, and bade him approach. So Pietro, climbing up, leaned over the mouth of the tomb, when Romeo thus addressed him:

"Listen, Pietro: my wife lies here and you partly know how much I loved and still do love her. I felt that it was as impossible for me to live without her as for a body to exist without a soul, and so I brought poison with me — snake-water which, as you know, can kill a man in less than an hour. This of my own free will I have drunk, so as to die here by the side of her whom living I so dearly loved; and though in life I was not allowed to be with her, I shall at least lie beside her in the grave. See, here is the phial, which, if you recollect, we got of the Spoletine in Mantua — the fellow that had those live asps and snakes. Of His pity and infinite goodness may

God pardon me, for not to offend against Him have I slain myself, but because without my dear wife I could not live. And if you see these eyes of mine full of tears, not for my lost youth do I weep, but because I grieve for her death — she deserved to live a happier, more tranquil life. Give this letter to my father; I have written to him that which I wish done after my death; also about my burial here, and concerning my servants at Mantua. For you, who have served me so faithfully, I have made such provision that henceforth you will not need to become the servant of another; and I am sure that my father will carry out all my wishes to the letter. Now, get you hence, for death, I feel, is near; the poison overcomes me, and every limb grows numb. So, do you close the lid of the tomb, and leave me to die by my dear one's side." At these words Pietro felt as if, for very grief, his heart would break. All his remonstrances were vain, for there was no remedy against the poison, which now had gained hold of all parts of Romeo's body. Taking Giulietta in his arms, the lover kissed her unceasingly, and disposed himself to die, while again telling Pietro to shut down the lid.

Just then Giulietta woke, as the effect of the powder had passed off. Feeling herself kissed, she thought it was the friar, who in a moment of carnal impulse was embracing her as he bore her back to his chamber. So she said, "Alas! Fra Lorenzo, is this how you prove the trust that Romeo placed in you? Back, I say!" Then, as she struggled to free herself from his grasp, her eyes opened, and she found that he who embraced her was Romeo. Although he wore a German dress, she knew him well, and exclaimed: "Oh! my dear heart, is it you? Where is Fra Lorenzo? Why do you not bring me out of this tomb? Let us go away, for God's sake!"

At the sight of her eyes and the sound of her voice, Romeo knew of a certainty that Giulietta was not dead but verily alive, and he felt at once tremendous gladness and measureless, unspeakable grief. Straining her to his bosom, he cried, "Oh life of my life, and dearest heart of mine, what man has ever felt a joy like this which now possesses me? For I firmly believed you to be dead, but behold! I clasp you alive and safe in my arms! Yet what grief may match my grief? What torturing pain can vie with that which fills my heart, as I feel myself reach the end of all my dolorous days, and as life slips from me now, when most I need it? For at the most I cannot live more than half an hour! What mortal ever felt at one and the same moment such rapturous joy and such infinite grief? Though, dearest consort, I rejoice unspeakably that you are come back to life, incomparable sorrow covers me as I think that all too soon I may no longer see you, nor hear your voice, nor stay near you to enjoy your sweet company. But the gladness at your return to life far exceeds the sorrow at my own approaching death, and I pray the Lord God to give you those years of my hapless youth which now He takes away from me, letting you live long and have a far happier fate than mine, whose life, as I feel, now touches its close."

Then Giulietta replied: "What is this, love, that you say? Do you come from Mantua to comfort me with such news? What is it that ails you?" Then Romeo told her how he had drunk the poison, and she exclaimed: "Alas! and woe is me! What awful thing is this you tell me? Fra Lorenzo never wrote to you of the plan which he and I had made? He promised me that he would inform you of it all by letter!" And in her anguish the despairing damsel wept and shrieked, being well nigh beside herself, as she told Romeo all that had befallen, and all that she and the friar had arranged.

As thus she grieved, Romeo spied Tebaldo's corpse, and, turning to it, said: "Wherever now you be, Tebaldo, know this, that I never sought your harm. I joined the fray as a peace-maker, and to exhort you to get your men to withdraw, making my folk also lay down their arms. Yet, full of rage and ancient hatred, you cared nothing for my words, but with dire intent attacked me. Forced thereto, I lost patience, never ceding an inch, but, standing on my defence, as ill-luck would have it, I slew you. Now, for the harm I did your body, I crave your forgiveness, the more so as I was to have become your kinsman, by marrying this your cousin. If vengeance is what you desired, behold, you have it now. What greater vengeance would you have than to know that he who killed you has now poisoned himself in your presence, and dies here by his own hand, being buried with you in your tomb? Though in life we fought, in death we shall rest at peace in the self-same grave."

At these dolorous speeches Pietro, listening, became like a statue hewn out of marble. He knew not if he heard aright, or if he dreamed. Then Giulietta said to Romeo: "Since it has not pleased God that we should live together, may it please Him at least that I be buried with you in the tomb, for be sure that, come what may, I will never go hence without you." Romeo again embraced her, and, comforting her, besought her to live, that thus he might die happy in the belief that she would remain alive. Many things did he say to her, until, as strength and sight gradually failed him, he grew so weak that he sank down on the ground, and with his eyes turned piteously towards his sorrowing wife exclaimed, "Alas! dear heart! I die."

Now, for some reason or another, Fra Lorenzo did not wish to bear Giulietta to his chamber on the night of her burial, but next night, seeing that Romeo did not come, he went to the tomb with a trusty friar of his order, bringing tools wherewith to open it. He got there just as Romeo sank down in his death-agony. Seeing the tomb open, and recognising Pietro, he said: "Ho, there! where is Romeo?" Giulietta heard him, and cried: "May God forgive you for not sending the letter to Romeo!" "I did send it," replied the friar; "Fra Anselmo took it: you know him. Why do you speak thus?" "Come into this place and you shall see," answered Giulietta, weeping bitterly.

The friar entered, where Romeo lay half dead, and he said: "Romeo, my son, what is it? what ails you?" Then, with a languid look, Romeo recognised him, and bade him take care of Giulietta, since he was now past all living help or counsel; and, repenting him of all his sins, he craved forgiveness of him as of God. So saying, he feebly beat his breast, and then his eyes closed, and he lay there, dead.

In excess of grief Giulietta fell senseless upon her husband's body, and remained for some while in a deep swoon. The friar and Pietro sought to revive her, and when she regained consciousness, she gave vent to her tears as she kissed the corpse, and exclaimed: "Oh fairest home of all my thoughts and of my pleasures! my one and only darling lord; from being sweet how are you now become bitter! You have ended your course while yet in the flower of your lovely and pleasant youth, caring nothing for a life that all others held so dear. You wished to die at a time when others most long to live, reaching that end to which sooner or later all must come. Oh, my lord, you came to die in the arms of her whom most you loved, and who loved you with a matchless love, for, thinking her dead and buried, you of your own free will were for burying yourself with her. Never did you deem that these her tears would fall for you; never did you think to pass over to the other world and not find her there. But soon, love, soon will I come to you, and stay with you for evermore!"

Distressed at her anguish, the friar and Pietro did all they could to comfort her, but in vain; and Fra Lorenzo said at last: "My daughter, what is done cannot be undone. If mourning could bring back Romeo from the grave, one and all we would dissolve ourselves in tears, that so we might succour him; but for this thing no remedy exists. Take heart; be comforted, and hold on to life; if you desire not to return to your home, I will find shelter for you in a nunnery, where, in the service of God, you can pray for the soul of your Romeo." However, she would on no account listen to him; but, being resolved to die, she checked within her all her vital forces, and, embracing Romeo once more, straightway expired.

As the friars and Pietro were busied with the dead girl, believing that she had swooned, the sergeants of the watch came along, and, seeing a light in the tomb, they all hurried thither, to seize Pietro and his companions. On being told the sad story, they left the two friars strongly guarded, and brought Pietro before Signor Bartolomeo, the Governor, and told him under what circumstances they had arrested him. Signor Bartolomeo caused the tale of the hapless lovers to be minutely narrated to him, and, as dawn had now come, he rose and went out to view the bodies.

The report of the tragedy soon spread throughout all Verona, so that young and old flocked forthwith to the vault. Pietro and the friars were set at liberty, and the burial of the two lovers took place with great pomp, amid the great grief of the whole city. The Governor desired that they should be buried in the same grave, and this caused a peace to be made between the Montecchi and Capelletti, though it did not last very long.

LUIGI PIRANDELLO

(1867–)

Luigi Pirandello was born at Girgenti, Sicily, in 1867. He received his education first in Italy, and later at Bonn, where he took post-graduate degrees in philosophy and philology. "His subsequent career," writes Isaac Goldberg, "has been devoted to professorship, but has permitted him enough leisure in which to produce a veritable library of books . . . From poetry he progressed to the novel, to criticism, to the theater." He wrote an immense number of short stories and short novels, of which the tale that follows is characteristic. This story appears here for the first time in English, by permission of the translator, Professor M. J. Hubert.

IN SILENCE

WATERLOO? Good Heavens, you pronounce it Waterloo?"

"Yes, sir, after St. Helena."

"After? What are you talking about? What has St. Helena to do with it?"

"Oh, yes, the Island of Elba."

"No! No! Let the Island of Elba alone, Brei. Do you think a history lesson can be made up on the spur of the moment? Sit down."

Cesarino Brei, pale and timid, sat down, and the professor kept looking at him for a bit, vexed if not annoyed.

That boy, whose diligence and enthusiasm for study had been so praiseworthy in the first two years of his course — that is, since he had put on the uniform of a boarding-student in the National Academy, though he was still very attentive to his lessons, like the good pupil that he was — now, look at him. He couldn't even understand the real reasons why Napoleon Bonaparte had been defeated at Waterloo.

What had happened to him?

Not even Cesarino himself could explain it. He sat hour after hour studying, or rather he sat with his books open, staring at them nearsightedly through his thick lenses, but he could no longer fix his attention on them, diverted and distracted as he was by new and confused thoughts. And this not only since he had entered the Academy, as the professors thought, but for some time before. Indeed Cesarino might have said that it was precisely because of these thoughts and certain strange impressions, that he had allowed his mother to induce him to enter the Academy.

His Mother, who called him Cesare, not Cesarino, had said to him without looking directly into his eyes, "Cesare, you need a different kind of a life; you need the companionship of boys of your own age, and a little system and regularity, not only in your studies, but in your recreation. If you don't mind, I'd thought of having you spend this last year of your preparatory course in the Academy. Would you like to?"

He had hastened to answer Yes, without even stopping to think, for during the past few months the sight of his mother had been distressing to him. An only son, he had never known his father, who must have died very young indeed, for his mother could still be called young. She was thirty-seven. He himself was already eighteen, that is, just the age his mother was when she married. The figures kept coming back to his mind.

Indeed the fact of his mother's being still young and having married at eighteen, did not necessarily mean that his father must have died so very young, because his mother might have married a man older than herself, perhaps even an old man, mightn't she? But Cesare had little imagination. He did not think of this, nor many other things.

Besides there was no picture of his father in the house, nor any evidence that he had ever existed. His mother had never spoken of him, nor had the son ever taken a notion to find out about him. He knew only that his father was called Cesare, just as he was, and that was all. He knew it because in the school certificate the name was written "Brei, Cesarino, son of the late Cesare Brei, born at Milan," etc. At Milan? Yes. But he knew nothing of his native town; simply that at Milan there was the Cathedral, the Galeria Vittorio Emmanuele, and Milanese buns; that was all. His mother, who was also Milanese, had settled in Rome directly after her husband's death and his own birth.

When he thought about it, Cesare almost felt that he scarcely knew even his mother. He almost never saw her during the day. From morning till two in the afternoon she was at the trade-school, where she taught drawing and embroidery; after that she went her rounds until six, or seven, sometimes even eight in the evening, giving private lessons in French and piano. She came back tired at night. In the brief interval before supper there were other cares, other domestic duties that the servant could not manage; and immediately after supper she must correct the exercises of her private pupils. Furniture that was more than respectable, all the creature comforts, a well-filled wardrobe, a larder plentifully stocked, all these to be sure came from the constant labor of his indefatigable little mother; but what gloom, what silence in that house!

Cesarino, looking back on it from the Academy, felt his heart wrung. When he was at home, as soon as he had returned from school, he had lunched alone wearily, in the little dining-room richly furnished, but almost dismal, with a book open in front of him, propped against the water

bottle, with the white square of the napkin laid out on the old walnut table; then he shut himself up in his room to study, and finally in the evening when they called him to supper, he came out with his mind dulled, clouded, befogged, his nearsighted eyes staring through his glasses. Mother and son exchanged few words as they supped. She asked him what news there was at school, how he had spent the day? Often she reproached him for his manner of living, which was so unyouthful, and urged him to bestir himself. She entreated him to get out more in the open air during the day, to be more sprightly, more of a man. Study was necessary, to be sure, but there had to be diversion, too. It grieved her, indeed it did, to see him so weary, so pale, so lacking in appetite. He gave her brief replies — Yes or No; he promised without enthusiasm and waited impatiently for the end of the supper so that he might go to bed at once: he was in the habit of getting up early in the morning.

Growing up thus alone, he had never been on familiar terms with his mother. He saw her and felt that she was very different from himself; she was so eager, energetic, self-reliant. Perhaps he was like his father, and the void that his father had left so long ago stood between him and his mother, and had grown steadily with the years. His mother, present though she was, always seemed to him a long way off.

Now this impression had grown to the point of causing him an odd feeling of discomfort, when (much later, to be sure, but Cesarino, you know, had little imagination) as a result of a conversation with two schoolmates, the first childish illusions of his soul had fallen away from him, unexpectedly revealing to him certain "shameful" secrets of life hitherto unsuspected by him. Then his mother had as it were leaped to still greater distances away from him. During the last days he spent at home, he had noticed that despite the large amount of work she handled every day, without resting, from morning till evening, she still remained beautiful, very beautiful and very vivid; and that she took the greatest care of her beauty. She dressed her hair each morning with long and loving solicitude, she wore clothes of aristocratic simplicity, and uncommon elegance. He even felt almost offended by the perfume which she used, of which he had never been so definitely aware.

It was precisely to get away from this curious attitude of mind toward his mother, that he had accepted at once the proposal that he enter the Academy. But had she noticed it? Or what had moved her to make him the proposal?

Cesarino thought it over now. Since earliest childhood, he had been well-behaved and studious; he had always done his duty without anyone's supervision. He was rather slender, but none the less healthy. The reasons adduced by his mother did not convince him in the slightest degree. He kept struggling with himself to escape certain thoughts that filled him with shame and remorse, the more so because he knew now that his mother was

ill. For several months she had not come to visit him at the Academy on Sundays. The last time she had come she had complained of not feeling well; and indeed Cesarino had noticed that she was not as robust as before; he had noted on the contrary an unwonted carelessness in her coiffure which had made him feel a more acute remorse for the evil thoughts suggested by the extreme care which she had formerly devoted to it.

From the little letters his mother sent him from time to time, asking him whether he needed anything, Cesarino learned that the doctor had ordered her to rest because she had tired herself too much and for too long a time, and that he had forbidden her to leave the house, though he gave assurance that it was nothing serious, and that if she scrupulously followed his orders she would doubtless be cured. But the illness dragged on; Cesarino was worried and could scarcely wait for the day when the school year would end.

Naturally, in this condition of mind the true reasons conceived by the professor of history to explain why Napoleon Bonaparte had been defeated at Waterloo could not succeed in penetrating his mind, for all the efforts that he made.

That same day, as soon as he got back to the Academy, Cesarino was summoned by the principal. He expected some serious reproof because of the small profit he had derived from his year of study; but instead, he found the director very kindly and affectionate, and apparently a little worried as well.

"Dear Brei," he said to him, unexpectedly putting a hand on the boy's shoulder, "You know that your Mother . . ."

"Is she worse?" interrupted Cesarino immediately, raising his eyes to look at him, almost in terror; his school-cap dropped from his hand.

"Yes, my boy, it would appear so. You must go home at once."

Cesarino remained looking at him, in his suppliant eyes a question his lips dared not utter.

"I'm not very sure," said the principal, understanding the unuttered question. "A woman came from your house a little while ago, to summon you. Courage, my boy. You must go now. I shall leave the school prefect at your disposal."

Cesarino left the principal's office with his mind in a whirl; he had no idea what he should do, where he should go, in order to get home. Where was the prefect? And his cap? Where had he left his cap?

The principal handed it to him, and ordered the prefect to remain at the boy's disposal for the remainder of the day, if necessary.

Cesarino ran to the Via Finanze where the house was located. A few paces before he reached there, he saw that the great door was ajar, and he felt his legs grow weak beneath him.

"Courage," repeated the prefect anew. The whole house was upside down, as though death had entered there by violence.

Entering precipitously, Cesarino hastened to his mother's room, to the far corner of the room, and there he caught sight of her, stretched on the bed. She seemed so tall — this in his bewilderment, was his first odd impression of surprise — tall and long, oh God, as if death had stretched her out by main force; rigid, paler than wax, and already livid in the hollows of her eyes and along her nose. Unrecognizable!

"How? How?" he stammered, at first almost more curious than terrified by the sight, hunching up his shoulders and stretching out his neck to stare, as myopic people do.

As if by way of reply, there came from the other room, breaking horribly into that deathly silence, the shrill wail of a child.

Cesarino turned sharply as if the wail had cut into him like a knife penetrating his body, and with a shudder that shook his whole frame, looked at the servant who was weeping silently and kneeling beside the bed.

"A baby?"

"In there," she answered with a gesture.

"Hers?" he asked in dismay, more with his breath than with his voice.

The servant nodded by way of affirmation.

Once more he turned toward his mother, but he could not endure the sight. Bewildered by the sudden atrocious revelation which stupefied him and wrung his heart with bitter anguish, he hid his eyes in his hands, while from deep within his tortured body, there surged something like a shriek which his throat, choked with pain, would not let pass.

In childbirth then? Died in childbirth? But how? And immediately there flashed into his mind the suspicion that yonder in the room from which that infant wail had come, there was *some one;* and he turned a glance of hate upon the servant.

"Who? Who?"

It was all he could say; with a hand that wavered, he tried to straighten the glasses that were slipping from his nose because of the tears which, meanwhile, unexpectedly streamed from his eyes.

"Come, come," said the servant.

"No, tell me," he insisted.

But finally he became aware that in the room beside the bed, there were other people whom he did not know, who were looking at him in pitying surprise. He said no more, and allowed himself to be led by the servant into the little room he had occupied before he went to the Academy.

There was no one there but the midwife, who had just finished bathing the new-born infant, still puffing and purple.

Cesarino looked at it with a shiver, and turned once more to the servant.

"No one here?" he said as if to himself. "This baby?"

"Oh, my dear young master!" exclaimed the servant, clasping her hands, "what can I tell you? I don't know a thing, I don't. That's just what I was telling the midwife here. I honestly don't know a thing. Not a single soul has even come here; *that* I can swear to!"

"Didn't she tell you?"

"Never. Not a thing. She never told me a single word, and I certainly couldn't ask her. She used to cry, you know, oh she cried so much, and in secret. She never went out of the house again after it began to show . . . you understand me, don't you?"

Cesarino, shuddering, raised his hands in a gesture which told the servant to say no more. However potent was his need to know, in the dreadful void into which sudden death had cast him, he still did not wish to know. The shame was too great. His mother had died of it, and she was still in there.

He pressed his hands over his face, moving to the window to mull over his suppositions in the darkness of his mind.

Nor could he remember ever having seen, while he was in the house, any man who might have aroused his suspicions. But outside the house? His mother had lived so little at home; what did he know of the life she had led outside? What was his mother, beyond the very narrow circle of the relations he had had with her before, there, during the evenings, at the supper table? A whole life, from which he had always remained apart. She had found someone, to be sure . . . Who was it? He wept. So this man had abandoned her, because he was unwilling or unable to marry her. And that was why she had shut him up in the Academy; to save herself and him from inevitable shame. But afterwards? He would have been sure to leave the Academy next July, and then? Did she perhaps intend to erase every trace of her guilt?

He unclasped his hands to look at the baby again. There he was; the midwife had wrapped him in his swaddling clothes, and had laid him on the little bed in which he himself used to sleep when he was a child. That little cap, that tiny shirt and the bib . . . No, of course she intended to keep the baby. It was certainly she who had prepared that layette for him. So when he left the Academy he would have found at his home this little new being. And what would his mother have said to him then? There, there was the reason why she had died! Who knows what tremendous hidden torture she had endured through those months! Ah vile, vile was the man who had inflicted it upon her, by abandoning her after having dishonored her! And she had shut herself up in her house like an animal in its den, to conceal her state, and perhaps she had lost her position as teacher in the trade school? . . . On what resources had she lived throughout those months? On the savings, of course, savings that she had accumulated through so many years of work. But now?

Cesarino suddenly felt the void gaping blacker and vaster all about him. He saw himself alone, alone in life, without any relation, near or distant; alone, with that tiny creature yonder, whose entrance into the world had killed his mother, and who was likewise left alone in the same void, abandoned to the same fate, without a father — like himself.

Like himself? But then, perhaps he, too, . . .? How did it happen that he had never thought of it before? Perhaps he too had been born thus? What did he know of his father? Who had that Cesare Brei been? Brei? But wasn't that his mother's family name? Yes, Enrica Brei. Thus she signed herself, and everybody knew her as Signora Brei, the schoolteacher. If she had really been a widow, would she not have resumed her maiden name when she came to Rome and entered the teaching profession? She might perhaps have added her late husband's name to it? But she had not: Brei was clearly his mother's maiden name; consequently he bore her name alone. And the late Cesare, of whom he knew nothing, of whom not the slightest trace had remained in the house, had perhaps never existed: Cesare perhaps, he had been, but not Brei . . . Who knows what his father's name had been! How did it happen that he had never thought of these things before?

"Listen, dear young master!" said the servant, "the midwife has something to say to you . . . about the little baby . . ."

"Yes, sir," interrupted the midwife, "that child needs milk right now. Who's going to give it to him?"

Cesarino gazed at her in bewilderment.

"It's like this," went on the midwife, "I was just saying that . . . with a birth like this . . . and because your Mama, poor thing, is no more . . . and you're a poor boy who couldn't tend to this tot . . . I was just saying . . ."

"You mean, to send it away?" said Cesare, knitting his brows.

"But look here," the woman resumed, "I am obliged to make a report to the city authorities . . . I've got to know what you mean to do."

"Yes," said Cesarino, bewildered anew, "Yes . . . just wait . . . first I want . . . I want to see . . ."

And he looked about him as if he were hunting for something. The servant came to his aid.

"The keys?" she asked him in a low tone.

"What keys?" he said, thinking of nothing at all.

"You want the bunch of keys, to see . . . I don't know what. Just look; they're in your Mother's room, on the wash stand."

Cesarino started to go and see, but he stopped short at the thought of looking again upon his mother, now that he knew. The servant, who was about to follow him, added in a still lower tone:

"We'll have to provide for so many things, young master. I know you're upset, all alone like this, poor innocent soul that you are . . .

The doctor came, I rushed to the pharmacy . . . I got so much stuff . . . that wouldn't amount to anything; but now we've got to think of your poor Mama too, haven't we? What shall we do? . . . Look for yourself, won't you?"

Cesarino went to get the keys. He saw his Mother again stretched out long and rigid on the bed, and as if attracted by the sight, he approached her. Silent, silent now forever, those lips from which he would have wished to hear so many things! She had carried away with her into the horrible silence of death, the mystery of that baby and the other mystery of his own birth . . . But perhaps if he hunted, if he rummaged around . . . Where were the keys?

He took them from the wash stand and followed the servant into his mother's little study.

"There . . . Look in there in that chest of drawers."

He found there a little more than a hundred Lire, which perhaps were all that was left of the savings.

"Nothing else?"

"Nothing, wait . . ."

He had discovered a few letters in the chest of drawers. He wanted to read them at once. But they were all three of them from a woman, a teacher in the trade school, addressed to his mother at Rio Freddo, where two years before she had spent the summer vacation with him. And the year following, that teacher, a colleague of his mother, had died. From the last of the letters all of a sudden there slipped to the floor a little note which the servant hastened to pick up.

"Give it here! Give it here!"

It was written in pencil, without heading, without date, and ran thus:

Impossible today, perhaps Friday.

Alberto

"Alberto?" he repeated, looking at the servant. "It is he! Alberto . . . Do you know him? You know nothing about him? Absolutely nothing? Speak!"

"Nothing, young master, as I have told you."

He looked again through the chest, then in the drawers of the dressers, everywhere, turning everything upside down. He found nothing. That name alone, this information alone: that the baby's father was named Alberto. And his own father Cesare. . . . Two names, nothing else. And she, yonder, lay dead. And all the furniture in that house, unwitting, impassive. And now, without the slightest means of support in that void, with the baby scarcely born, he belonged to no one; he at least had had his mother up till now. Could he cast the child aside? No, by no means, poor little thing!

Moved by a powerful feeling of pity, already almost a brotherly tenderness, he felt awakening within him a desperate energy. He took out of

the chest of drawers a few of his mother's jewels, and handed them to the servant, so that she could borrow some money on them, to tide over the moment. He went into the living-room to ask the prefect, who had accompanied him, if he would tend to all that had to be done, for his mother. He went back to the midwife and begged her to find a nurse at once. He hastened to get his school-cap out of the chamber of death; and after having made, deep within his heart, a solemn promise to his mother that neither he nor this little infant of hers would die, he hurried to the Academy, to talk with the principal.

In the course of a few seconds he had become another being. Without a complaint, he explained his situation to the principal, asking for aid, his manner full of assurance, firm in the conviction that no one could possibly deny him help, because from now on he had a sacred right to it, in the name of all the wrong that had been inflicted upon him, an innocent creature, by his own mother, by the unknown man who had given him life, by that other man who had taken his mother away from him, leaving in his hands a new-born child.

The principal who, as he listened to the boy, stared at him with open mouth and eyes filled with tears, promptly assured him that he would do everything in his power to get help for him at once, and that he would never abandon him. He clasped him to his breast, wept with him, told him he would come to see him at his house that very evening, and added that he hoped to bring good news.

"All right. Yes, sir. I'll be expecting you."

And he returned home in a mad rush.

The help, none too generous, arrived promptly; and Cesarino was scarcely aware of it, because it went at once for the expenses of his mother's funeral, which other people arranged.

He had no thought for anything but the baby, how to save the child and himself, how to get it out of that dismal house into which so much material ease had entered, who knows how, who knows whence, to bring him to confusion; furniture, draperies, carpets, kitchen utensils, the whole array, if not luxurious, at least expensive. He looked upon it almost with rancor, because of the secret nature of its origin. He must get rid of it right away, retaining only the humblest and most necessary objects to equip the three mean little rooms that, with the principal's help, he had rented in a house beyond the city walls.

Desperately he arranged to sell the things to peddlers and dealers in second-hand furniture, whom fellow-lodgers recommended to him; because — a strange thing, too — he had the feeling that all these furnishings belonged particularly to the baby, now that his mother had died for its sake, thus making known to everyone the shame attached to this material well-being. Tiny and unaware of everything as he was, in

heaven's name let the child have the right not to feel the shame; if someone would only defend his interests, struggle on his behalf.

The clothes and furbelows left by his mother he would likewise have sold to a melancholy sickly old-clothes dealer, all overflowing with weariness and affectation, had not the woman, mingling soft words with sugary smiles, allowed him to understand the kind of clientele for whom the clothes and trinkets were destined. He drove her away. Ah, these discarded garments, seeming almost as if they were alive, how they retained the fragrance that had so upset him during the last months! Now as he piled them in armfuls to put them back again, he seemed aware, as it were, of the breath of the baby, confirming his strange impression that everything there, belonged to the little creature, washed, powdered, swaddled in the luxurious baby clothes that she had prepared for him before she died. And now that baby appeared to him a dear and precious thing, not merely to be saved, but to be watched over with all the loving care that his mother would have taken; he was happy to feel within himself, thus suddenly reawakened, her fine courageous verve.

He was not aware, as others were, that the easy and lively readiness of his mother seemed like a desperate forced energy when it showed itself in the unfortunate leanness of his own wretched body, that it made him seem hard, suspicious, even cruel. Yes, cruel, as he showed when he sent away the old servant Rosa, who had been so kind to him in all the confusion. But one could not feel ill-disposed toward him for what he said or did. After all, it was right that he should dismiss the servant, considering that he had to meet the heavy expense of a nurse for the baby; he might indeed have done it another way, but people pardoned him even that as Rosa herself had pardoned him, because, poor fellow, he could never suspect that he was being cruel to others, he who at that moment was enduring the relentless cruelty of fate. At the most, if compassion had not kept them from it, they might have smiled at him, seeing him thus harried, with his narrow hunched shoulders, his small face, pale and tense and suspicious, his eyes peering nearsightedly through his thick glasses. Breathless, distressed by fear lest he should not arrive on time, he hastened here and there, taking advantage of every opportunity. People helped him, and he didn't even thank them. Not even the principal of the Academy when, after he had moved, that gentleman came to his new quarters with the news that he had found a position for him as underclerk in the Ministry of Public Instruction.

"It isn't much, I know. But you can come to the Academy in the evenings when you get through at the Ministry, and take some of the private lessons we give to the boarding students, in the lower classes. You'll get along, you'll see. You're a good boy."

"Yes, sir, but how about clothes? I can't go to the ministry dressed like a school boy."

"You can put on one of the suits you had before you came to our school."

"No, sir, I can't do that. They're all the way Mama wanted them made, with short trousers. And besides, they aren't even black."

Every difficulty that arose — and there were so many — irritated and distressed him. He wanted to conquer, he must conquer. But apparently the duty of winning the victory devolved upon others, though his inclination to succeed was strong enough. And at the ministry, if the other clerks, all mature old men, spent their time in idle jesting, despite the threats of their superiors that this copying office would be done away with because of the small service it rendered, first he squirmed on his chair, raging, or stamped his foot, then he turned sharply around from his little desk to look at them, beating his fist on the back of the chair; not that their stupid negligence seemed dishonest to him, but because, not feeling any obligation to work with him and, so to speak, for him, they placed him in danger of losing his position. Seeing themselves thus called back to their duties by a boy, it was natural that the men should laugh and take to making fun of him. He leaped to his feet. He threatened to go and denounce them, and he only made things worse; because they promptly defied him to do it; and then he was obliged to recognize that, if he did, he would probably hasten the ruin of the whole group. He stood looking at them as if their laughter had torn him to the quick; then he once more bent his wretched shoulders over the desk and went on copying and recopying as many pages as he could, looking over the few pages copied by the other men, in order to correct their errors; deaf to the bantering jests with which they were now pleased to ridicule him. Certain evenings, in order that the work assigned to the office might be finished, he did not leave the ministry until an hour after all the rest. The principal saw him reach the Academy, breathless, panting, his eyes hardened by a kind of spasmodic stare that came into them at the thought that he might not be strong enough to defend himself from the difficulties and adversities of fate to which there was now united only too closely the malignity of men.

"Why, no, no, no," said the principal to him, by way of comforting him, and sometimes he reproached him affectionately.

He listened neither to reproaches nor to comfortings, just as he never saw anything in his hasty progress through the streets, in the morning, in order to be punctual at the office, coming as he did from quarters far beyond the walls; at noon, rushing all the way home to lunch, and then dashing back hastily to get to the office at three. He always walked, either to save carfare or because he was afraid lest he should be unpunctual because he might be obliged to wait for the car. In the evening he was completely done up. He was so tired that he hadn't even the strength to stand upright while he held Ninni in his arms. He was obliged to sit down first.

Sitting on the little balcony, with its rusted iron railing, which had

seemed to him so beautiful in the view it gave of suburban orchards, he would have liked to feel himself rewarded for the labor, the rushing hither and thither, the bitterness of the whole day's work, by the pleasure of holding Ninni on his lap. But the child, now about three months old, refused to stay with him, perhaps because, scarcely ever seeing him during the course of the day, he was not yet familiar with his face; perhaps, too, because Cesarino did not know very well how to hold him in his arms; or perhaps because he was sleepy, as the nurse used to say by way of excusing him.

"Come, give him back to me, I'll rock him a little while, and get him to sleep, and then I'll take care of you and get your supper."

As he waited for supper, seated on his little balcony in the last chill glow of twilight, gazing — perhaps without even seeing it — at the slim moon already gleaming in the wan empty sky, then as he lowered his eyes to the dirty little street, mean and deserted, flanked on one side by a dry and dusty hedge that skirted the orchards, he felt his soul overwhelmed in its weariness, by a desperate feeling of squalor; but the moment that tears began to tingle in his eyes, he clenched his teeth, took a tight grip on the iron bars of the railing, stared at the single light in the narrow street — a light with two panes of glass broken by the mischievous youngsters of the neighborhood — and began deliberately to think evil things about the young pupils of his school, and even about the principal. For he now felt that he could no longer trust the principal as he had before, since he had become aware that, while the man was doing him good, to be sure, he was doing it mostly for his own sake, to give himself the agreeable feeling that he was being kind-hearted; and when he received these benefits, Cesarino felt both embarrassed and humiliated. And those office companions of his, with their dirty talk and sly questions that tried to cover him with shame. "If and how he did it, — whether he had ever done it!" And now a sudden spasm of weeping came over him at the memory of an evening when, dashing madly through the streets like a blind man, he had collided with a woman of the streets who, pretending to ward him off, had promptly wrapped both arms around him and held him to her, causing him to inhale the very fragrance he had associated with his mother. With a cry of terror he had torn himself away from her and fled. He felt himself still scourged by her scoffing cry: "Verginello!" and once more he gripped the railing and clenched his teeth. No, he never, never could do it because he would forever have in his nostrils, filling him with horror, that scent that his mother had used.

Now in the silence he listened to the sharp tapping of the chairlegs on the floor, first the two front ones, then the two back ones as the nurse gently rocked the child to sleep; and beyond the hedge the swishing sound of the water as it issued forth in fanshaped spray from the serpentine hose with which the gardener sprinkled the orchard. He liked this rustle of

water, it refreshed his spirit and he didn't want too much of it to fall on any one spot if the gardener happened to be absent minded; he knew at once when that happened, by the dull sound it made when it struck the earth. Why did there now come to his mind that tea-cloth of damask linen with the sky-blue border and the ravelled fringe, which his mother used to spread on a little table when she offered tea to a guest on the rare occasions when she happened to be at home at five o'clock? That tea-cloth . . . Ninni's layette . . . his mother's elegance and taste, her scrupulous cleanliness, — and now, a dirty cloth spread on the table; the supper not yet prepared, his bed yonder not made. If, the child at least were well cared for — but no indeed. His little dress was dirty, his bib was dirty; and if he addressed the slightest reproach to that nurse, he was sure to anger her, and there was a risk that she would take advantage of his absence to vent her spite on the innocent little creature. Besides, she would promptly offer the double excuse that since she had to take care of the baby, she had no time either to straighten the house or to tend to the cooking; and that if the baby was not properly cared for, it was because she was obliged to be both servant and cook. A coarse, ugly woman from the country, with the air of a tree-trunk, she now thought she was making herself beautiful by primping, and by doing up her hair; but at any rate she fed the child well; and ill cared for as he was, he throve. Ah, how he resembled his mother! The same eyes and nose, the same mouth. . . . The nurse tried to make Cesarino think the child resembled him. But that was nonsense. Heaven only knew whom he resembled! At present he was not interested in finding out. It was sufficient for him that Ninni resembled his mother; in fact, it made him happy, because when he kissed the tiny face he would see no feature to make him think of that unknown man whom he now had no further wish to discover.

After supper, at the same table only just cleared, he began to study with the intention of presenting himself the following year at the examinations for the *licenza*, in order to enter the University, with his fees remitted, if he were fortunate. He would enter the law school; and if he succeeded in obtaining a degree, it would stand him in good stead in various secretarial competitions at the Ministry of Public Instruction, where he now worked. He wished to rise as soon as possible above his petty and none too secure position as clerk. But certain evenings, as he studied, he was, little by little, attacked and then vanquished by a kind of dull discouragement. These things that he must study appeared so distant from his present labors! And lost in the feeling of that distance, he got the notion that the labor itself was in vain, that it was not to have an end, that it never could come to an end. The silence of the three nearly bare rooms was so deep that he even became aware of the humming of the oil lamp which he had taken from its hook and placed on the table that he might see better: he took his glasses from his nose; with half-open eyes he gazed

at the flame, and great tear-drops welled from beneath the lids, dropping upon the book held open beneath his chin.

But these were passing moments. Next morning he returned to his duties more persistently than ever, stretching from between his rounded shoulders his bony wax-like face, strained and damp, with his smooth sickly hair grown too long in front of his ears, and his powerful glasses that gave an odd glare to his small shining piercing eyes, and which pinched deep into the thin walls of his nose.

From time to time the old servant Rosa came to pay him brief visits. Little by little she too pointed out to him all the misdeeds of the nurse; and to put him on his guard, she reported the various things that the women of the neighborhood were saying about her. Cesarino shrugged his shoulders. He suspected that Rosa was speaking out of spite because, in order not to be sent away, she had proposed to him at the very beginning that it might be well to bring up the child on sterilized milk, as she had seen done by so many mothers, and they had been well pleased with the results. Finally he was obliged to admit that Rosa was right, when he was forced to dismiss the nurse on discovering that she was two months pregnant. Fortunately, the baby did not suffer from the change in diet, largely because of the loving care of the kindly old woman, who was glad to return to the service of these two derelicts.

And now, finally, Cesarino was able to enjoy to the full the sweetness of the tranquillity for which he had so painfully fought. He knew that his Ninni had been entrusted to good hands, and he was able to work and study in peace. When he came home evenings he found everything in order; Ninni fresh as a bridegroom, the supper well prepared, the bed properly made. The first articulate cries, the first graceful tricks of the child, filled his heart to overflowing with joy. Every other day he had him weighed, for fear lest his weight should decrease by reason of the artificial nourishment, for all that Rosa kept on reassuring him:

"Don't you feel that he weighs more than I do? He always has his little trumpet in his mouth!" The trumpet was the nipple of his bottle.

"Come, Ninni, play us a little tune."

Ninni promptly complied. He didn't have to be told twice. It didn't suit him that others should hold his bottle for him: he wanted to hold it himself, there, like the fine trumpeter he was, and he closed his precious little eyes in languid and exquisite pleasure. Both of them gazed upon him in ecstasy, and because the baby often went to sleep before he finished his bottle, they got up very quietly and holding their breath, walking on tiptoe, they placed him in his cradle.

Resuming his evening studies with redoubled vigor, now that he was sure of success, Cesarino at last grasped perfectly the real reasons why Napoleon Bonaparte had been defeated at Waterloo.

Coming home one evening, hastily as usual and all athirst for his Ninni's

kisses, he was stopped at the threshold by Rosa who, in great distress, informed him that there was a gentleman who wished to speak to him; he had been waiting a good half-hour.

Cesarino found himself confronted by a man of about fifty, tall and square of stature, dressed in mourning, his hair gray and his face swarthy, looking dark and serious. He had risen at the sound of the door-bell, and was waiting in the tiny dining-room.

"You wish to speak to me?" asked Cesarino, irresolute and alarmed.

"Yes, alone. If you don't mind."

"Come in."

Cesarino pointed to the door of his little bed-room and stood aside for the stranger to enter; then, closing the door with hands that trembled, he turned round, his face excited and very pale, his eyes protruding behind his glasses, his brows knitted. He shot out the question:

"Alberto?"

"Yes, Alberto Rocchi. I have come. . . ."

Cesarino came close to him, his face convulsed and distorted as if he were about to burst into invective:

"What for? Why have you come to my house?"

The other drew back, growing pale and holding himself under restraint:

"Let me talk. I have come with the best of intentions."

"What intentions? My mother is dead."

"I know it."

"Ah, you know it? Go away from here at once, or I'll make you sorry for it!"

"But forgive me. . . ."

"Sorry, sorry that you came here to inflict on me the shame . . ."

"Why, no. . . . Excuse me. . . ."

"The shameful sight of you! Yes, sir. What do you want of me?"

"But pardon me, you don't let me talk. . . . Calm yourself!" replied the man, who was now disconcerted, "I understand, of course. But I must tell you . . ."

"No!" shouted Cesarino, resolute and quivering, his thin, clenched hands upraised. "Look here, I don't care to know anything about it! I don't want any explanation! It is sufficient that you have dared to appear before me. Clear out of here!"

"But my son is here . . ." said the man, thickly, his patience exhausted.

"Your son?" screamed Cesarino. "Ah, that's why you came, eh? Now you remember that your son is here?"

"I couldn't come any sooner than this . . . If you don't let me explain . . ."

"What do you mean? Go away from here. Go away from here. You brought my mother to her death. Go away or I'll call for help."

Rocchi half closed his eyes. He heaved a deep sigh and remarked:

"Very well. This simply means that I shall have to establish my rights elsewhere."

And he started to leave.

"Rights? You?" shouted Cesarino after him, completely beside himself with rage. "You miserable wretch! After killing my mother, you think you have rights to establish? You, against me? Rights?"

The man turned a dark look at him, then his lips parted in a smile of mingled scorn and compassion at the slightness of the boy who stood insulting him.

"We shall see," he said.

And he went away.

Cesarino remained in the darkness, behind the door of the dining-room, quivering with the violent shock inflicted on his weak and timid soul by the mingled emotions of anger, shame and the fear of losing his precious darling. Calming himself as best he could, he knocked at Rosa's door. The woman had locked herself in, clutching the baby tightly in her arms.

"I understood. I understood," said Rosa.

"He wanted Ninni."

"He?"

"Yes, and his rights, do you understand? He wants to establish his rights . . ."

"He? And who could ever admit that he had rights?"

"He is the father. But can he take Ninni away from me now? I drove him out, like a dog. I told him it was he who had killed my mother . . . that it was I who made a home for the child . . . and that from now on the child is mine, mine. And no one can tear him from my arms! Mine! Mine! I tell you. The idea! The miserable mur-mur-murderer . . ."

"Why, yes! Yes! Calm yourself, young master," said Rosa, even more worried and distressed than Cesarino. "Even if he uses force, he shan't come and take the little darling away from you, he shan't. Let him establish his rights if he wants to – I'd like to see anybody take Ninni away from us, after we've brought him up this way. But don't you worry, don't you worry, he won't appear again, not after the proper reception you gave him."

Neither these nor the other reassuring words that Rosa kept repeating to him all evening, availed to restore Cesarino to a state of calm. The following day at the Ministry he endured real torture, torture unending. At noon he rushed home, trembling, his heart in his mouth. He was unwilling to start back to the office, where he was due at three in the afternoon. But Rosa persuaded him to go, promising that she would keep the door tightly barred, that she would open it to no one, and that she would not allow Ninni out of her sight even for a minute. So he went. But he returned at six, without going to the school for the usual evening lesson with the younger boys.

Seeing him act like one benumbed, stupefied and bewildered, Rosa tried in every way to stir him up. But it was in vain. Cesarino had a presentiment that gnawed at his soul, and gave him no peace. All night long he did not close his eyes.

The next day he did not come home at noon for lunch. Old Rosa could not understand why he failed to appear. Finally, towards four o'clock, she saw him coming, breathless, livid, a ferocious glare in his eyes.

"I have to give Ninni to him. I was summoned to the questor's office. He was there, too. He showed my mother's letters. He is his."

He spoke thus, in little jerky phrases, without raising his eyes to glance at the baby, whom Rosa held in her arms.

"Oh, my little sweetheart!" exclaimed the woman, clasping Ninni to her breast. "But how can he? What did he say? How can justice — ?"

"He is the father! He is the father!" replied Cesarino. "Therefore the child is his."

"And you?" asked Rosa. "What will you do?"

"I? I shall go with him. We're going together. To his house. To his house!"

"Oh, that's the way it is? The two of you together, eh? Then that's all right. You won't have to give him up. . . . And how about me, Signorino? How about poor old Rosa?"

Cesarino, in order not to give a direct answer, took the baby in his arms, clasped him to his breast, and began tearfully to talk to him:

"Poor old Rosa, Ninni? Shall we take her with us? It isn't fair to leave her. We can't do it. We'll just have to leave everything here to poor Rosa. The few things we have. And we were getting along so nicely together, just the three of us, weren't we, Ninni mine? But they wouldn't let us. They wouldn't let us . . . "

"Well," said Rosa, choking down her sobs, "you're not going to begin worrying and distressing yourself about me, young master. I'm old, I don't count any more: God will take care of me. If only you two are happy. . . And besides, I'll be able to come and visit you once in a while, won't I? Just to see my little darling? Surely they won't drive me away if I come? After all, why shouldn't it be this way? After the first little while is over, perhaps it will be a good thing for you, too. Don't you think so?"

"Perhaps," said Cesarino. "In the meantime, Rosa, you must get everything ready, at once. Everything we have got for Ninni, and my things, and yours, too. We're leaving this evening. They expect us for dinner. Listen, I leave everything to you. . ."

"What do you mean, master? What an idea!" exclaimed Rosa.

"Everything . . . Everything I have with me . . . in the way of money . . . I owe you so much more, for all the affection . . . Hush, hush now. We'll say no more about it. You know it, and I know it. And that's enough. And this bit of furniture too. . . We'll find another whole house there . . .

You may do anything you like with this. Don't thank me. Just get everything ready, and we'll leave. You first. I can't go away, leaving you here. Then to-morrow you can come and see me, and I'll leave you the keys and everything."

Old Rosa obeyed, without answering. Her heart was so full that if she had opened her mouth to speak, sobs and not words would certainly have come forth. She got everything ready, including her own bundle.

"Shall I leave it here?" she asked. "Because, if I'm to come back to-morrow . . . "

"Yes, of course," replied Cesarino, "Now, come here and kiss Ninni . . . Kiss him, and say goodbye."

Rosa took in her arms the little creature, who looked at her in some dismay — but at first she was unable to kiss him: she was obliged to give way to her pent up feelings, remarking as she did so:

"It's a silly thing, to be weeping . . . because to-morrow . . . Here he is master . . . take him. And cheer up, won't you? A kiss for you too. . . Till to-morrow."

She left without once looking around, choking her sobs in her handkerchief.

At once Cesarino barred the door. He passed his hand through his hair, which seemed to be standing, stiff and erect. He carried Ninni to the bed and set him down: he put the silver watch in his hand, to keep him quiet. Very hastily he scribbled a few lines on a sheet of paper: a deed of gift, making over to Rosa all his trifling household goods. Then he went into the kitchen — very quickly, he prepared a good charcoal fire — he carried it into the bed room — he closed all the shutters and the door. And by the light of the lamp which old Rosa always kept lighted in front of an image of the Madonna, he stretched out on the bed beside Ninni. The latter promptly dropped the watch on the bed, and, as usual, raised his hand to take the glasses off his brother's nose. Cesarino, this time, let him take them off. He closed his eyes and held the baby tight to his breast:

"Hush, Ninni darling, hush. . . Let's go to sleep, my precious, let's go to sleep."

Spain

INTRODUCTION

THE literature of Spain is rich in stories and tales and every sort of prose and verse romance. The ballads and epics that were brought together or actually written in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries — especially those concerned with the national hero known as the Cid — constitute the earliest mass of fiction in the Spanish language, though the original composition of certain elements of the Cid story goes back probably to the Twelfth Century. In the following century Alfonso the Wise and certain other writers introduced short tales and legends, borrowed largely from foreign sources, into their writings on historical subjects. Fables and *Fabliaux* were likewise translated or adapted by contemporary and later authors.

The best-known collection of short stories is the *Conde Lucanor* by Juan Manuel (1282–1347). One of the earliest Spanish novels was Juan Rodriguez' *El Siervo libre de Amor*, which dates from the early Fifteenth Century. It was during the same century that the celebrated romance of chivalry, *Amadis de Gaula*, made its appearance. Little is known of its origin, but its influence was immense. Until the day when *Don Quixote* sealed the fate of this sort of story, Spanish authors were busily engaged in turning out quantitites of romantic and chivalric romances. A few of these may still be read with pleasure, especially novels of adventure like Mendoza's *Lazarillo de Tormes*, Aleman's *Guzman de Alfarache*, and Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and *Exemplary Novels*. Cervantes and the best of his contemporaries were imitated by a number of Seventeenth Century writers, who added, however, little that was original. Quevedo and Montalván are among the best of the fiction writers of this period.

It was not until the Nineteenth Century that the art of fiction was again taken up by writers who had anything very much worth while to say. Juan Valera, Alarcón, Bécquer, Caballéro and Pardo-Bazán, are the outstanding figures in prose fiction of the last century who wrote short stories and short novels.

The Spaniards of the past generation have excelled in the shorter forms. Aside from the contemporary Eduardo Zamacois, one of whose stories appears in these pages, may be mentioned "Azorin" and Vicente Blasco-Ibanez.

JUAN PEREZ DE MONTALVÁN

(1602–1638)

Doctor Juan Perez de Montalván (or Montalbán) became a priest at the age of twenty-three. He is best known as a dramatist, one of the cleverest and ablest imitators of Lope de Vega, whose friend and associate he was. He died insane at the age of thirty-six.

In 1624 he published a volumes of *Novelas*, from which the following tale is taken.

The translation was made by Thomas Roscoe, and is reprinted from Roscoe's *Spanish Novelists*, London, no date.

THE TEST OF FRIENDSHIP

A YOUNG gentleman of Toledo, of the name of Felesardo, having involved himself in an adventure which threatened serious consequences, was compelled to leave the place of his birth with as much expedition as possible. He was proceeding on his journey, accompanied only by his servant, and had arrived within a few leagues of the city of Valencia, when, on entering a wood, he suddenly encountered a lady, who was in the act of descending in the utmost haste from her carriage. In her agitation she had neglected to veil herself, and discovered a countenance so lovely, and at the same time so full of affliction, that the cavalier resolved at once to offer her all the protection and assistance which she might require, and place at her disposal his well-tried courage and his sword. This generous determination was gratefully acknowledged by the lady, who did not reject the seasonable interposition of the stranger. "Heaven itself," she exclaimed, "seems to have sent you hither to save me from the misery that hangs over me. Let me beseech you to follow me. Hasten with me to separate two combatants, who have arranged to meet in this wood, and who have entered it, as I myself saw, but a few minutes since. They are already engaged." As she uttered these words she rushed into the wood, and the Toledan, leaving his horse in his servant's hands, hastily followed her footsteps.

They had advanced but a few paces, when they heard the clashing of swords, at the sound of which they redoubled their speed, and soon arrived at the spot where two men were fighting with the utmost fury. The Toledan, running forward, exerted himself to separate them, in

which, partly by entreaty, and partly by force, he at length succeeded. When tranquillity was in some measure restored, he enquired into the origin of their quarrel. "Don Fabrique de Mendoza," answered one of the combatants, "has the honour of replying to your question, and the name of my enemy is Don Alvaro Ponce.

"The cause of our dispute has accompanied you hither. The lady who stands here — this cruel Donna Rosaura — is the object of our love; but all our devotion has not produced any return of affection, nor could the most assiduous attentions on our part soften the austerity of her manner. Notwithstanding this cold indifference, I had intended to persist peacefully in my solicitations, but my rival has adopted another course; he has compelled me to meet him here." "Which," interrupted Don Alvaro, "is the only step I could take. If I had no competitor in Donna Rosaura's affections, she might be induced to listen to me; my object, therefore, is, by his death, if by no other means, to remove the obstacle to my happiness." In reply to this statement, the Toledan did not hesitate to express his disapprobation of their conduct. He represented it as injurious to the character of the lady, whose reputation ought to be dearer to them than their own happiness or lives, but which might be implicated, when it was known throughout the kingdom of Valencia that they had fought on her account. "Besides," continued he, "what results can the conqueror expect from his victory? Can he imagine that after he has made her name the topic of public scandal, she will regard him with a more favourable eye? Impossible! Listen to me. I would entreat you jointly to make an effort more worthy of the noble names you bear. Restrain your furious passions, and consent to bind yourselves by an oath to abide by the arrangement which suggests itself to me. I see a mode by which your differences may be adjusted, without the shedding of blood. It is this, — let the lady declare that her choice has fallen on one of the two, and let the unsuccessful lover, renouncing all hostile measures, take his departure in peace." "With all my heart," exclaimed Don Alvaro, "I swear by everything that is sacred that I will conform to your proposal. Only let Donna Rosaura take her resolution; if it is to be so, let her prefer my rival to myself. Even this misfortune would be more tolerable than my present state of uncertainty." "And I call Heaven to witness," said Don Fabrique, "that if the dear object of all my adoration does not pronounce in my favour, I will banish myself at once from her presence, and though I may not be able to forget her charms, at least I will never see them more."

"Now, Madam," said the Toledan, turning to Donna Rosaura, "the rest depends upon you; with a single word you can disarm these enraged rivals. You have only to name the happy man who is to reap the reward of his constancy." The lady hesitated — "I should prefer," she said at last, "some other mode of accommodation. Why am I to be made the

price of their reconciliation? I do not refuse my esteem to either of these gentlemen, nor for either of them do I feel any livelier sentiment. Is it reasonable that I should be called upon to encourage hopes which my heart does not sanction, in order to protect myself from the injurious surmises to which their quarrels may give rise?"

"Madam," replied the Toledan, "this is no longer a time for evasion; you must, if I may be allowed to say so, speak your sentiments explicitly. These gentlemen appear to have equal merit, but I feel assured that one of them has a preponderating influence over your heart; of that fact I am sufficiently apprised, by the overwhelming terror which possessed you on our first meeting." "On that terror," replied the lady, "you put a wrong construction. I do not deny that the loss of either of these gentlemen would affect me deeply, and that, innocent as I might be of his fate, I should yet reproach myself with being the cause of it; but I must say, that if I exhibited any symptoms of terror, it was from a consideration of my own situation, and a regard for my own honour, that they sprung."

The disposition of Don Alvaro Ponce was naturally impetuous, and his patience at these words was exhausted. "This is too much," he exclaimed passionately; "since the lady declines the proposal, and we cannot settle the matter peaceably, let the chance of arms decide it." As he spoke, he assumed an offensive attitude, and prepared to attack his enemy, who, on his part, put himself into a position of defence.

At this demonstration all the lady's terrors revived; and influenced more perhaps by these than by any secret partiality, she exclaimed in the utmost distress: "Hold your hands, gentlemen! your demand shall be complied with; since no other method can be found to prevent a conflict which so immediately affects my reputation, I declare that Don Fabrique de Mendoza is the object of my preference." No sooner had she pronounced these words, than the disappointed suitor, darting a furious glance at his mistress and his happy rival, ran to his horse, which he had tied to a tree, and disappeared without uttering a syllable. On the other hand, the joy of the fortunate Mendoza was at its height. He cast himself at the feet of Donna Rosaura; he embraced the Toledan again and again; and could not find expressions sufficiently strong to convey the full force of his gratitude and joy.

When the lady, however, had somewhat recovered her serenity, and perceived that Don Alvaro had departed, she began to reflect with some concern that she had consented to admit the addresses of a lover, whose good qualities she certainly esteemed, but to whom her heart was yet indifferent. She addressed herself to Don Fabrique, and appealed to his sense of honour, not to make an ungenerous use of the preference she had declared in his favour, which only proceeded from the absolute necessity of making a choice between him and Don Alvaro. "Not," said she, "that I have not always distinguished your superior claims to my

regard; I know very well that you possess many good qualities to which he cannot pretend. I will do you the justice to say, that I believe all Valencia cannot produce a more accomplished gentleman than yourself. I will even go further, and will admit, that the attentions of a man like you might gratify the vanity of any woman; but whatever reason I might have to enjoy such a triumph, I must candidly confess that it has so few charms for me, that I regret exceedingly to see the marks of attachment you show to me. It is possible that this insensibility may have its source in the grief I yet feel for the loss I sustained a year ago, when my husband, Don Andrea de Cifuentes, died. Our union was but of short duration, and he was already advanced in age, when my parents, influenced by his great wealth, compelled me to marry him; but, notwithstanding these circumstances, I was much afflicted by his death, and mourn for him every day. And was he not worthy of regret?" continued she; "he in no respect resembled those ill-natured and jealous husbands, who make their age a plea for watching, either in person or by their deputies, every step of a wife who happens to be younger than themselves. The confidence which he reposed in my virtue could not have been exceeded by a husband whose youth and passion might have been a guarantee for my fidelity. There were no bounds to his indulgence, and his only study appeared to be to anticipate all my wishes. Such was Don Andrea de Cifuentes; and you will readily conceive, Don Fabrique, that it is not easy to forget a man endowed with such a disposition. His image is ever present to my mind; and it cannot be doubted, that this circumstance contributes in no small degree to draw my attention from the efforts which others may make to attract my regard."

Unable to control his feelings, Don Fabrique here interrupted the beautiful widow — "With what delight," he exclaimed, "do I hear from your own mouth, the admission that the indifference you have shown to my advances does not arise from any personal dislike. My persevering constancy will, I trust, at last prove me to be worthy of your love." "I shall throw no impediments in the way," replied the lady; "you have my permission to visit me; nor do I restrict you from speaking to me of your love, and endeavouring to establish an interest in my heart. Should any success attend your efforts, I will not disguise my sentiments; but if, notwithstanding the opportunity this afforded, you should happen to fail in your object, I must entreat you to recollect, that it will not be of any conduct of mine that you will have a right to complain."

At these words, without permitting Don Fabrique to utter the reply which was upon his lips, the lady took the hand of the Toledan, and returned abruptly by the way she came. The disconcerted lover followed her, leading his horse by the bridle, until arriving at the spot where her equipage awaited her, she re-seated herself with as much agitation as she had shown on her arrival; though from a very different cause. The two

cavaliers accompanied the carriage to the gates of Valencia, where the parties separated. The widow took the road to her own mansion, and Don Fabrique entertained the Toledan as his guest. When their spirits were sufficiently recruited with repose, and an excellent repast, their conversation turned on the object of the stranger in visiting Valencia, and the stay that he proposed to make in that city. "I shall leave it," observed the Toledan, "as soon as I possibly can. I am merely passing through it, on my way to the nearest seaport, where I propose to take my passage in the first vessel which may be leaving the coast of Spain. I care little in what part of the world I terminate my unfortunate carcer, provided it be far enough from this ill-fated land." "You surprise me," returned Don Fabrique; "what calamity can have excited feelings like these, and caused you to abhor the great object of our natural affection — our native land?" "After what I have undergone," replied the Toledan, "my country is hateful to my sight, and my only desire is to quit it for ever." The sympathy of Don Fabrique was roused by this avowal, and he expressed much impatience to be made acquainted with the cause of his companion's grief. "If I cannot soothe your pangs," said he, "I can, at least, share them with you. At our first interview, your countenance prepossessed me in your favour. Your manners have added to the charm, and I cannot refrain from taking a lively interest in every thing that concerns you."

"The sentiments you express," returned the Toledan, "form the only consolation I can now receive. As some acknowledgment of the kindness you have shown me, I will, on my part, confess, that when I first saw you in company with Don Alvaro Ponce, I felt a partial inclination for you, which I do not recollect to have before experienced on my first meeting with any one, and which made me very uneasy, lest Donna Rosaura should prefer your rival to yourself. My joy, therefore, was great when she determined in your favour. This first impression has been since so fully confirmed, that, so far from designing to conceal my sorrows from you, I promise myself some degree of pleasure in laying before you all my feelings. My unhappy story will be soon told.

"My name is Don Juan de Zarata; my family resides in Toledo, where I first saw the light. In my infancy, I had the misfortune to lose both my parents, from whom I inherited a considerable property. When I had arrived at an age which entitled me to the absolute control of my estates, finding myself free from engagements, and sufficiently wealthy to consult only my own wishes in the disposal of my hand, I married a young lady of great beauty, in whose small fortune and inferior condition I saw no obstacles to our union. Intoxicated with my happiness, and anxious to secure the complete possession of the object of my love, I conducted her, a few days after our marriage, to one of my estates at a little distance from Toledo. Here we resided for some time in the enjoyment of perfect

happiness, until the Duke de Naxera, who possesses a mansion in the neighbourhood of my property, called one day to refresh himself after the fatigues of the chase. The sight of my wife inspired him with a licentious passion. This, at least, was my impression; and I was more fully persuaded of the fact, when he began to court my society with an eagerness which he had not before shown. He invited me to join his hunting excursions, loaded me with presents, and made abundant professions of his desire to serve me.

"I was at first alarmed at these indications, and resolved to return with my wife to Toledo, a resolution which my better angel certainly suggested to me. In fact, if I had deprived the Duke of all opportunities of seeing my wife, I should have escaped all the evils which have fallen upon me; but my confidence revived when I reflected on the virtues of my wife. I flattered myself, too, that a person whom I had married without a fortune, and whom I had raised from an inferior station in society, could not possibly repay my benefits with ingratitude. Alas! little did I know her heart. The two great vices of the sex, ambition and vanity, exercised their full empire there.

"As soon as the Duke had found an opportunity of apprising her of his sentiments, she seems to have congratulated herself on having made so brilliant a conquest. To be worshipped by His Excellence, was an exquisite gratification to her pride. Her head was filled with the dreams of inflated consequence. She valued herself more, and loved me less. Nay, all that I had done for her, instead of exciting her gratitude, now called forth only her contempt. She began to think that her beauty might have won a worthier husband; and she did not doubt, but that if this distinguished nobleman had seen her before her marriage, he would have shared with her his rank and fortune. Carried away by these silly ideas, and influenced by his prodigal presents, she abandoned herself to the criminal pursuit of the Duke. A secret correspondence was carried on by them, of which I had not the least suspicion; but it unfortunately happened that my eyes were at length opened to my situation. Returning one day from the chase at an earlier hour than usual, I entered the apartment of my wife when I was least expected. She had just received a letter from her lover, to which she was preparing to reply. Her embarrassment at my sudden appearance was sufficiently evident to fill me with the greatest uneasiness, and seeing the pen in her hand, I desired her to let me see what she had been writing. Her refusal led me to conclude that I was betrayed; and it was only to actual force that I was indebted for the satisfaction of my jealous curiosity. In spite of her opposition, I plucked from her bosom a letter, of the contents of which I have but too faithful a recollection.

"'How long am I doomed to languish in the expectation of a second delightful interview? How long will you persist in permitting me to

nourish the sweetest hopes, which you cruelly delay to realise? Don Juan is absent every day in the city, or at the chase, and why should we not avail ourselves of these opportunities? Show some commiseration for the ardent passion which is destroying me. Grant me at least your pity. If it is the greatest of pleasures to obtain the object of our wishes, think what a torture it must be to wait long for its possession.'

"Transports of rage overpowered me when I had perused this production. My hand was already on my dagger, and the first impulse of my frenzy was to lay dead at my feet the faithless woman who had dared to sport with my honour. A moment's reflection convinced me that this would be an imperfect revenge, to the full satisfaction of which another victim was required. I suppressed my rising fury; I assumed a tranquil air, and addressed my wife with as little appearance of emotion as possible: — 'You have been to blame,' I said, 'to listen for a moment to the Duke's solicitations. The splendour of his rank ought not to have made any impression on you; but I am aware that youth is dazzled by these vanities, and that, I trust, is the extent of your offence. I therefore look upon your indiscretion as not unpardonable, provided you listen henceforward to the dictates of your duty, and endeavour to prove yourself worthy of my affection, and of the lenity I have now shown to you.'

"With these words I left her apartment, and endeavoured in solitude to subdue the violent transports of my passion. If I could not regain my peace of mind, I at least succeeded in affecting an air of tranquillity for several days, at the end of which I pretended that business of importance required my presence in Toledo. Having informed my wife that I was under the necessity of quitting her for some time, and besought her to regulate her conduct carefully during my absence, I took my departure.

"Instead, however, of continuing my journey to Toledo, I took advantage of the night to return secretly to my house, where I concealed myself in the chamber of one of my domestics, in whom I could confide. From this station I could see everybody that entered the house. I fully expected that the Duke would be informed of my departure, and that he would not fail to profit by such a favourable opportunity. I then proposed to surprise them together, and to enjoy a signal revenge. It so happened, however, that I was deceived in all these anticipations; I could not perceive any indications of the expected arrival of my enemy. Everything, on the contrary, proceeded with the greatest regularity; and when three days had elapsed without the Duke or any of his retainers making their appearance, I began to believe that my wife had really repented of her error, and had broken off all correspondence with her lover.

"Under this revulsion of feeling, I dismissed all further thoughts of revenge, and yielding to the dictates of love, which returned with increased force after the exhaustion of my indignation, I proceeded to my

wife's apartment; I embraced her with transport, assuring her that she was fully restored to my esteem and love. I acknowledged that I had not been at Toledo; that the journey was only pretended, that I might prove her fidelity. 'But,' I continued, 'you must forgive me for employing this stratagem. My jealousy had some foundation; I doubted whether you had strength of mind to throw off those false ideas to which you had given way; but, heaven be thanked, I find that you have seen your error, and henceforward we will hope for undisturbed tranquillity.'

"These words appeared to affect my wife, who could not refrain from tears. 'It was an unhappy hour for me, indeed,' she replied, 'when I gave you the slightest reason to suspect my fidelity. The misconduct which so justly raised your displeasure, appears detestable in my eyes. The tears I have shed might suffice to wash away the traces of my folly; but all my sorrow, all my remorse, cannot restore me to the place I once held in your heart!' 'It is all forgiven,' I exclaimed; 'everything is forgotten; your sincere repentance makes amends for all!' I was, in fact, much moved by her apparent contrition, and from that moment began to regard her with as much affection as formerly. We resumed our usual habits of life, and enjoyed again the happiness which had been so cruelly disturbed. It seemed indeed to be my wife's wish to efface every vestige of doubt from my mind; and she took more pains to please me than she had ever done before. Her affection displayed itself with increased vivacity, and I almost congratulated myself on the misunderstanding which had produced such pleasing results.

"At this period I was attacked by a distemper, which, though not very formidable, alarmed my wife much. You can hardly conceive the terror she displayed. She spent the whole day in my chamber, and though I slept in a separate apartment, she insisted on coming two or three times in the course of the night, to learn in person how I was going on. With the most earnest attention she anticipated all my wants. One would have thought her existence had depended on mine. For my part, I was so struck with the marks of tenderness which she lavished on me, that I was never weary of assuring her how sensible I was of her cares. It will soon appear what sincerity there was in all this display.

"My health was now pretty well re-established, when one night I was awakened by my valet, who seemed much agitated. 'I am sorry, Sir,' he said, 'to interrupt your repose; but I think it my duty not to conceal a fact that has come to my knowledge. The Duke de Naxera is at this moment with your lady.'

"This intelligence came upon me like a thunderbolt. I looked at my valet for some time in silence; in fact, I could not speak. The more I reflected on the account he gave me, the less I was inclined to credit it. 'It is utterly impossible,' I cried, 'that my wife can be guilty of such monstrous perfidy. You know not what you say.' My valet assured me

that there was no doubt of the facts, and that he had not relied on questionable grounds. He had suspected that, since my illness, the Duke had been introduced every night into my wife's chamber, and having concealed himself for the purpose of ascertaining the truth, he had obtained but too certain evidence of my dishonour.

"I sprung from my bed like a madman, seized my sword, and rushed to my wife's apartment, followed by my servant. The Duke was in fact there, and rising from the bed, as we approached, he seized a pistol, advanced towards me, and fired. In his hurry and confusion he missed his aim; and in another moment I sprung upon him, and plunged my sword into his heart. I then turned to my wife, who lay more dead than alive. 'Infamous wretch!' I exclaimed, 'take the reward thy treachery deserves!' and with these words, I buried in her bosom the weapon still reeking with the blood of her admirer.

"I am far from justifying my violence, Don Fabrique; and I must confess, that I might have sufficiently punished that unhappy woman, without having her blood upon my hands; but what man can, under such circumstances, continue master of his reason? Recollect all the attentions she had bestowed on me during my illness; all the exaggerated demonstrations of affection; all the enormity of her treachery and deceit; and then say if a husband, animated with such just indignation, is not worthy, at least, of pardon.

"A few words more will complete this tragic story. When I had satiated my revenge, I was well aware that I had no time to lose. I knew that the family of the Duke would pursue me, wherever I might be in Spain; and that as the influence I could exert was very far inferior to theirs, I could only find safety in a foreign land. Before daybreak, I left my house, attended only by my valet, taking with me two of my best horses, and all the money and jewels I could collect. I took the road to Valencia, with the design of embarking in the first vessel which might sail for Italy. I have only further to say, that as I was passing near the wood where you were, I met Donna Rosaura, and complying with her request, followed her, and assisted her in putting a stop to your combat."

When the Toledan had finished his story, Don Fabrique assured him that he had taken a just revenge upon the Duke de Naxera. "Dismiss all uneasiness," said he, "as to any pursuit which his relations may institute. Make my house your abode, till you find a convenient opportunity of passing into Italy. My uncle is the governor of Valencia; you will find a safer refuge here than elsewhere, and you will have for your host, one who henceforward binds himself to you by the ties of the sincerest friendship."

Don Juan made a suitable reply to these generous professions, and accepted the asylum which had so opportunely presented itself. They frequently went in company to the house of Donna Rosaura, by whom the assiduous attentions of Don Fabrique were received with the same indif-

ference. He felt greatly mortified at his ill success, and sometimes complained to his friend, who endeavoured to encourage him, by representing to him that the most insensible heart must yield to continued marks of devotion; that it was a lover's duty to wait with patience for this favourable change; that he had only to persevere, and, sooner or later, his mistress would reward his constancy. Such topics as these, though well supported by the lessons of experience, could convey no confidence to the apprehensive lover; he despaired of ever being able to touch the heart of the lovely widow, and this fear threw him into a state of languor and despondency, which excited the pity of Don Juan. The latter, however, soon became an object of much greater commiseration.

Notwithstanding the very sufficient reasons which this gentleman had to hold the fair sex in eternal odium, after the notable treachery he had experienced, he could not protect his heart against the charms of Donna Rosaura. At the same time, he was far from abandoning himself to a passion so injurious to the duty he owed his friend; he contended vigorously against it, and feeling assured that he could only overcome it by absenting himself from the object which had excited it, he resolved to see that lady no more. Conformably with this determination, he always excused himself from accompanying his friend in his frequent visits to her house. On those occasions the lady remarked his absence, and never failed to inquire why Don Juan had ceased to visit her. At length, when she was one day urging her customary inquiries, Don Fabrique informed her, with a smile, that his friend had his own reasons for his conduct. "Reasons for avoiding me!" exclaimed the lady, "and what can they be?" "Madam," replied Mendoza, "when I urged him to accompany me to-day, and showed some surprise at his refusal, he informed me in confidence — and to explain his conduct I must make the same communication to you — that he has formed a tender attachment, and that the short stay he is making in this city renders every moment of consequence to him." "This is a very unsatisfactory reason," replied the widow, with a heightened complexion. "Because he is a lover, is he to be permitted to forsake his friends?" Don Fabrique remarked the rising colour of his mistress, but he attributed it simply to her wounded vanity, and imagined that the mortification of seeing herself neglected had excited her blush. In that supposition he was mistaken; a more lively sentiment than vanity occasioned the emotion which she could not repress; but, anxious to dissimulate her feelings, she gave a turn to the conversation, and during the remainder of the interview affected a cheerfulness, which might have baffled the penetration of Mendoza, even if he had not been, as he was, wholly without suspicion.

When Donna Rosaura found herself alone, she abandoned herself to a train of new and unpleasant ideas. She now felt for the first time all the force of the inclination she had conceived for Don Juan, and thinking that she had more cause to complain of his insensibility than was really the

case, she could not suppress a sigh. "What unjust and barbarous power," said she, "delights in exciting love which cannot be returned? I am indifferent to Don Fabrique, who adores me, and Don Juan, to whom my heart inclines but too strongly, has attached himself to another. Ah, Mendoza! reproach me no longer for my coldness — thou art amply revenged by thy friend!"

This mingled pang of grief and jealousy found some relief in a shower of tears; but hope, which seldom fails to mitigate the lover's pain, soon began to present brighter prospects to her view. She conjectured that her rival might perhaps not be very formidable; that Don Juan had probably yielded less to her charms than to her complaisance, and that such feeble bonds might not be very difficult to break asunder. To enable herself to form some opinion on this subject, she resolved to have an interview with him, and conveyed to him an intimation of her wishes. Don Juan obeyed the summons, and when they were alone, the lady commenced her investigation.

"I could not readily have believed," said she, "that love could make any cavalier forget what he owed to the fair sex, yet they tell me, Don Juan, that you have yielded up your heart, and that for this reason, you have withdrawn from my society. I think I have grounds for complaining of your conduct; yet I cannot believe that in taking this step you have acted without compulsion. Confess at once that your mistress has forbidden you to see me; that may be some excuse. I know very well that lovers are not masters of their own actions, and that they dare not disobey the commands of their mistresses."

"Madam," answered the Toledan, "I candidly own that you have reason to be surprised at my conduct but I must beseech you not to call upon me to justify it. Be satisfied when I inform you that I have substantial grounds for what I have done." "Whatever these may be," replied the lady, with emotion, "I insist upon your explaining yourself fully." "Well, Madam," rejoined Don Juan, "you shall be obeyed; but do not throw the blame on me, if you are thus made acquainted with more than you would wish to know."

"You have heard from Don Fabrique the particulars of the transaction which drove me from Castile. I fled from Toledo with my heart full of indignation against all the sex, whom I defied ever to ensnare me more. In this stubborn temper I approached Valencia, and sustained your first glances, which is more, perhaps, than any man ever did before, without being vanquished; I even saw you again and again with impunity, but dearly, alas! have I since atoned for my temerity. Your beauty, your intelligence, your united charms, at last obtained a complete victory. I am conquered — I am the victim of the most intense passion that you are capable of inspiring. You now know why I have shunned you. The amour in which I was said to be engaged is wholly imaginary. I suggested this,

as a confidential communication, to Don Fabrique, that I might not, by my continued refusal to visit you, excite in him any suspicion of the real cause."

This information, which was wholly unexpected by Donna Rosaura, delighted her so much, that she could not disguise her feelings. Indeed, she did not exert herself greatly to repress them, and instead of assuming a severe air, she cast a tender glance on the Toledan, and replied: "Well, Don Juan, since you have unbosomed yourself to me, I will be as sincere with you. Listen to me.

"Utterly indifferent to the attentions of Don Alvaro Ponce, and little regarding the attachment of Mendoza, my time was passing pleasantly and tranquilly away, when we chanced to meet for the first time on that unhappy day. Notwithstanding my agitation at the moment, my attention was attracted by the grace with which your services were proffered; and the manner in which you separated the two incensed rivals, gave me a high opinion of your courage and address. The expedient which you suggested for the termination of their dispute, displeased me. I could not, without much pain, come to the resolution of deciding in favour of one or the other. To tell you the plain truth, I believe that some part of my repugnance might be attributed to yourself; for at the very moment, when yielding to necessity, my tongue pronounced in favour of Don Fabrique, I felt my heart give its suffrage to the stranger. Since that day, which, after the avowal you have made, I will call a happy one, the knowledge of your merit has added to the partiality I then conceived for you."

"You see," she continued, "that I do not affect to conceal my sentiments. I divulge them to you with the same frank sincerity that actuated me when I told Mendoza he had no place in my affections. A woman who has the misfortune to entertain a passion for a person who can never return it, has good reason for putting a strong constraint upon herself, and punishing her weakness by at least imposing on it an eternal silence; but it appears to me that she may, without hesitation, disclose an innocent attachment to a man whose intentions are honourable. I am, I confess, delighted to hear you own your love, and I return thanks to heaven, which has, no doubt, destined us for each other."

At these words the lady paused, in the hope of hearing from the lips of Don Juan a full expression of all the rapturous joy and gratitude with which she believed he was inspired; but instead of exhibiting any symptoms of pleasure at the information he had received, he preserved a gloomy and thoughtful silence.

"What is the meaning of this, Don Juan?" she resumed. "When I forget the proud reserve of my sex, and lay open my heart to you, a condescension for which any other man would perhaps have felt some gratitude, you repress the feelings which such a declaration must surely have excited. You are silent, you are sad; your eyes betray your melan-

choly. Ah, Don Juan, what an unexpected effect has my weak confession produced!"

"What other effect, Madam," replied the Toledan, gloomily, "could it possibly produce upon a heart like mine? The more you demonstrate the partiality you have conceived for me, the more miserable I become. You know as well as I, all that Mendoza has done for me. You are aware of the intimate friendship which unites us. Can I build my happiness upon the ruin of his dearest hopes?"

"As to that," replied the lady, "you are much too scrupulous. I have promised nothing to Don Fabrique. I am at liberty to bestow my hand upon you without incurring his just reproach, and you may receive it without subjecting yourself to the imputation of having stolen it from him. The idea of your friend's unhappiness must unquestionably give you some pain, but is that consideration of sufficient weight, Don Juan, to counterbalance the happiness which is before us?"

"It is, Madam," replied the Toledan, with a firm voice. "A friend like Mendoza has greater power over my feelings than you imagine. If you could possibly estimate all the tenderness, all the force of our friendship, how worthy would you find me of your pity! Nothing that concerns Don Fabrique is concealed from me; my interests and his are the same. The slightest matter in which I am interested cannot escape his attention; and to say all in one word, I share his heart with you. Alas, to have enabled me to reap the benefit of your kindness, I ought to have been aware of its existence before I had formed so firm and intimate a friendship. Enraptured with the honour of pleasing you, I should then have regarded Mendoza only as a rival. My heart, put upon its guard against the approaches of his partiality, would have made no return to it, and I should not have incurred the obligations under which I at present lie. That time, Madam, is, unfortunately, past. I have received every possible assistance from his hands. I have yielded to the attachment I felt for him. Compelled as much by gratitude as by my own inclinations, I am reduced to the painful necessity of declining the happy fortune that might otherwise have awaited me."

As he finished these words, the tears rose in Donna Rosaura's eyes, which she attempted to wipe away. This gesture deeply affected the Toledan, whose firmness began to give way; he could no longer answer for his resolution. "Farewell, Madam," he continued, in a voice broken with sighs — "farewell! I must fly from your presence if I mean to preserve my honour. I cannot bear your tears; they arm you with too much persuasion. I must take an eternal leave of you, and weep over the loss of those charms which I am bound to offer up at the shrine of an inexorable friendship." He then exerted the little firmness which he yet possessed, and hastily withdrew.

The widow of Cifuentes, after his departure, was agitated by a thousand

confused sensations. Amongst these predominated the shame of having declared her sentiments to a man who had been able to throw off her charms. She could not, however, doubt that he was strongly attached to her, and that a regard for his friend's interest had alone induced him to reject the hand she had offered. She was reasonable enough to admire so singular an effort of friendship, instead of being offended at it. Nevertheless, under the influence of the mortification which always attends the frustration of our favourite designs, she resolved to set off the next morning for the country, in order to soothe her grief, or, it might rather be said, to augment it; since solitude is better adapted to reinforce, than to diminish, the violence of love.

Don Juan, on his part, not having met with Mendoza on his return home, shut himself up in his apartment, and gave himself up to his grief. After the effort he had made for the sake of his friend, he thought he might at least be allowed to breathe a sigh without reproach. Don Fabrique, who shortly after returned, interrupted his meditations, and apprehending from his appearance that he was unwell, he exhibited so much anxiety, that Don Juan was obliged to relieve him, by assuring him that he stood in need only of repose. On this representation, Mendoza withdrew, that his friend might retire to rest, but with so dejected an air, that the Toledan felt still more acutely his very unfortunate position. "Good heavens! why should the tenderest of friendships be thus converted into the greatest affliction of my life?" was the reflection that passed through his mind.

On the following day, Don Fabrique had not yet risen, when he was informed that Dona Rosaura had departed with all her establishment for her country seat at Villa Real, where it would appear that she intended to remain for some time. He was more chagrined at the secrecy which had been observed in taking this step, than afflicted by the absence of the object of his love. Without knowing in what way to account for her conduct, he could not help thinking it was a very unfavourable omen. He soon arose with the intention of visiting his friend, as well to learn the state of his health, as to converse with him on the subject of his alarm. But as he was on the point of leaving his chamber, he was prevented by the entrance of Don Juan, who came to relieve his uneasiness, and to inform him that his health was perfectly restored. "This good news," replied Mendoza, "in some measure indemnifies me for the unpleasant intelligence that I have received." The Toledan requested him to explain himself; and Don Fabrique, after his domestics had left the room, proceeded; "Donna Rosaura has set off this morning for the country, where she is expected to remain some time. This departure surprises me. Why has it been concealed from me? — what think you, Don Juan, have I not reason to be alarmed?"

But Don Juan took care not to acquaint Mendoza with his real opinion on this affair, endeavouring, on the contrary, to persuade him that Donna

Rosaura might be allowed to visit the country, without giving him cause for unhappiness. Mendoza, however, was not to be so amused, and interrupted his arguments, which he treated very lightly. "All this talk," said he, "cannot dispel the suspicions which agitate me. It is possible that I may unconsciously have done something which has offended Donna Rosaura, and to punish me, she may have quitted me without condescending even to explain the nature of my crime. However this may be, I am determined to remain no longer in suspense. Come, my friend, let us follow her. I will give orders to have our horses in readiness." "My advice," replied the Toledan, "is to take no person with you. There ought to be no witnesses of such an explanation." "Your presence cannot be objected to," said Don Fabrique; "Donna Rosaura is well aware that you are informed of all that passes in my breast. She has a regard for you, and far from causing me any embarrassment, you will be of great service to me in effecting a reconciliation." Don Juan still persisted in his refusal — "My presence, Don Fabrique," he urged, "cannot possibly be of any use. I beseech you to depart alone." "My dear friend," answered Don Fabrique, with equal obstinacy, "we will go together. I must rely upon your friendship to indulge me in this." "This is downright tyranny," exclaimed the Toledan, with an air of vexation; "why do you exact from my friendship a concession which I ought not to make?"

The abrupt manner in which Don Juan uttered these words, and the words themselves, which Don Fabrique could not understand, filled him with amazement. He fixed his eyes for some time upon his friend. "Don Juan," said he, "what is the meaning of the words I have just heard? What a frightful suspicion has suggested itself to me. Put an end to this hateful state of constraint on your part, and anxiety on mine. Tell me at once the real cause of your evident repugnance to accompany me."

"It was my earnest wish," replied the Toledan, "to conceal it from you; but since you have yourself compelled me to disclose it, I will no longer make a mystery of it. We must cease, my dear friend, to think the uniformity of our sentiments a subject for congratulation: it is unfortunately, only too perfect. The attractions which subdued you, have not had less influence on your friend; and Donna Rosaura —" "Is it possible you can be my rival?" exclaimed Don Fabrique, turning pale as he spoke. "As soon as I perceived my attachment," proceeded Don Juan, "I struggled to repress it. I constantly avoided Donna Rosaura, as you well know. You have even reproached me with my obstinacy in that respect. I at least obtained the victory over my passion, if I could not wholly destroy it. Yesterday, however, the lady intimated to me that she wished to see me at her own house. I waited upon her; she inquired why I appeared to avoid her with such care? I alleged some fictitious excuses, which she rejected. At length I was compelled to acknowledge the real cause; and on making this declaration, I expected that she would approve the resolution I had made

to fly from her presence; but, such is my singular destiny — how shall I explain it to you, and yet, Mendoza, you must be told — that I found Donna Rosaura entertained a preference for me!"

No man possessed a more rational mind, or milder manners, than Don Fabrique; but at these words he gave way to an impulse of fury, and indignantly interrupted his friend — "Stop, Don Juan," he cried, "stab me at once, rather than proceed with this fatal narrative. Not content with avowing yourself my rival, you even tell me that you are successful in your love! Good heavens! to dare to make a confidential disclosure like this to me! This is too rude a trial of our friendship. — Our friendship! It exists no longer. It ceased from the time when you conceived the perfidious sentiments you have now declared. What an error was mine! Generous, magnanimous as I thought you, you hesitate not to nourish an affection which is inconsistent with my happiness. You are a false friend. This unexpected blow overwhelms me: its force is aggravated by the hand which deals it." "Do me more justice," interrupted the Toledan, in his turn, "than to think and speak of me thus. Be patient for a few moments. Whatever I am, I am not a treacherous friend. Listen to me, and you will soon regret that you have applied that odious appellation to me."

He then narrated to him all that had passed between the widow of Don Andrea de Cifuentes and himself, the tender confession which she had made to him, and the attempts she had made to induce him to abandon himself to his passion. He repeated also the answer which he had made to these propositions; and as he made more and more apparent the firmness with which he had acted, Don Fabrique felt his indignation gradually subside. "At length," continued Don Juan, "friendship obtained the victory over love. I refused the offered heart of Donna Rosaura. She wept. I saw her tears, and heaven can witness the agony I endured at the sight. I cannot yet, without trembling, reflect upon the danger to which I was exposed. I began to feel as if I was acting too barbarous a part, and for a few moments, Mendoza, my fidelity to you was shaken. But I did not give myself up to this weakness, and, by a sudden departure, I released myself from that dangerous thraldom. It is not enough, however, that I have hitherto escaped without dishonour, I must provide against the future. I will remain here no longer, nor again expose myself to the glances of Donna Rosaura. Will Don Fabrique, after this explanation, persist in charging me with ingratitude and perfidy?"

"No," replied Mendoza, embracing him with warmth; "No! I esteem you wholly blameless. I now see the whole affair in a proper light. Pardon those unjust reproaches which you must ascribe to the frenzy of a lover, from whom all his hopes are torn at once. Alas! how could I believe that Donna Rosaura would see you often without loving you — without feeling the force of those attractions, which have acquired such influence over me. But you are a faithful friend. I impute all my unhappiness to my evil for-

tune alone; and so far from hating you as its cause, I feel more strongly attached to you than ever. Is it possible, that for my sake you renounce the possession of Donna Rosaura? Can you make this great sacrifice to our friendship, and shall I not be deeply sensible of its value? — Can you vanquish your passion, and shall I not make an effort to subdue mine? I ought not to yield to you in generosity. Follow, my dear friend, the inclination of your heart. Marry the widow of Cifuentes. My heart may mourn in secret, but it shall not prevent me from contributing to make you happy."

"Not upon these terms," replied Zarata; "my passion for her, I confess, is violent, but I value your repose more than my own gratification." "And ought the repose of Donna Rosaura," answered Don Fabrique, "to be a matter of indifference to you? The affection she entertains for you has decided my fate. I should be in no respect benefited if you should absent yourself from her, and in some distant land drag on a miserable existence, with the intention of surrendering to me the object of our love. If I have hitherto failed to please her, I am very certain that I am never destined to succeed. Heaven has reserved that happiness for you. She loved you from the first moment she saw you. She has a natural predilection for you. In one word, you alone can make her happy. Accept, then, the hand which she extends to you. Let your mutual bliss be complete. Abandon me to my misery, and be not weak enough to make three persons wretched, when all the severity of fate can be directed against one alone."

This generous contention was maintained for some time with equal warmth, but neither of the friends consenting to avail himself of the generosity of the other, they remained for some days in a state of painful suspense. They ceased to speak of Donna Rosaura; they no longer ventured to pronounce her name. But whilst, in the city of Valencia, friendship was thus effecting a victory over love, the latter was governing elsewhere despotic sway; and, as if he intended to take a full revenge, would permit no opposition to his authority.

Withdrawn to her country seat at Villa Real, situated near the sea, Donna Rosaura abandoned herself to her sorrowful and tender reflections. All her thoughts were devoted to Don Juan, and she could not prevail on herself to abandon all hope, although, after so remarkable a demonstration of the strength of his friendship for Don Fabrique, there appeared little reason to encourage such an expectation.

One evening, about sunset, whilst she was enjoying on the sea shore the coolness of the breeze, in company with one of her women, her attention was attracted by a small boat which had just reached the land. It carried seven or eight men, of a very suspicious appearance, whom, after surveying them more narrowly, and scrutinising them with some curiosity, she concluded to be masked. This was, in fact, the case, and they were moreover completely armed. She felt some alarm at this sight,

and anticipating nothing good from their visit to these shores, she immediately turned, and hastened to regain her home. She occasionally looked behind her as she went, and observing that the crew had landed, and were beginning to follow her, she began to run as fast as possible; but as she by no means rivalled Atalanta in this exercise, and as the masked pursuers were active and strong, she was overtaken and stopped by them, just as she had reached her own door.

The cries of the lady and her attendant soon drew together some of the servants, who spread a general alarm; and all the retinue of Donna Rosaura ran to the scene of action, having armed themselves in the best way they could, some with pitchforks and some with clubs. In the mean time, two of the most robust of the assailers had laid hands upon the mistress and her maid, and in spite of all their resistence carried them towards the skiff; while the remainder of the band made head against the people of Donna Rosaura, by whom they were now vigorously attacked. The conflict lasted some time; but the ravishers at length succeeded in effecting the object of their enterprise, and regained their vessel, fighting as they retreated. And indeed they had no time to lose; for they had not yet all reëmbarked, when they perceived a troop of horsemen advancing on the road which led to Valencia, riding at full speed, and apparently with the intention of assisting Donna Rosaura. On seeing this, the strangers lost no time in putting out to sea, and thus disappointed all the hopes which the near approach of the cavaliers had excited. These were no other than Don Fabrique and his friend Don Juan. The former had that morning received a letter, informing him that it had been ascertained that Don Alvaro Ponce was in the island of Majorca, where he had equipped a small vessel, and engaged the services of a band of desperadoes, by whose assistance he proposed to carry off Donna Rosaura, when she should afford an opportunity by visiting her country seat. Acting upon this information, Don Juan and himself, with their attendants, left Valencia without loss of time, for the purpose of putting the lady on her guard against the meditated abduction. While yet at some distance, they had observed a crowd of persons assembled on the shore, who seemed to be in a state of conflict; and suspecting that this tumult might turn out to be the realization of their fears, they had urged their horses to their utmost speed, to baffle, if possible, the project of Don Alvaro. Notwithstanding all their exertion, however, they arrived only in time to witness the very catastrophe which it had been their object to prevent.

Proud of the success of his expedition, Don Alvaro Ponce in the mean time pushed from the shore with his beautiful prize, and directed the course of his skill towards a small armed vessel which was standing out at sea, awaiting their return. Never was any grief more heartfelt and impassioned than that of Mendoza and Don Juan; they loaded Don Alvaro with execrations, and made all the shore resound with complaints,

equally affecting and useless. The example set by the masters was not lost upon the attendants and the household of the injured lady, who showed no disposition to economise their lamentations; that luckless coast seemed to have become the haunt of fury, desolation, and despair. It may be questioned whether the court of Sparta exhibited such symptoms of consternation, when it was first discovered that the fair Helen had eloped with her gallant Phrygian guest.

Although the servants of Donna Rosaura had not been able to prevent the outrage upon their lady, they had at least shown great courage in opposing it; and some of the people of Don Alvaro Ponce had experienced the effects of their zeal. One of these, in particular, had received so severe a wound, as to be incapacitated from following his comrades, who, on their retreat, left him stretched on the ground with little appearance of life. This man was recognised as having been in the service of Don Alvaro, and as he still breathed, he was conveyed to the house, where every means was employed to restore him to his senses. This object was at last accomplished, although the great quantity of blood he had lost left him in a state of extreme weakness. To prevail on him to reveal what he knew, promises were made to him that his recovery should be carefully attended to, and that he should not be delivered up to justice, if he would discover the place to which it was his employer's intention to carry Donna Rosaura.

Although there was little prospect of his ever reaping the benefit of these indulgences, he was not the less influenced by them. He collected the little strength he had left, and in a feeble voice confirmed the intelligence which had been transmitted to Don Fabrique; to this he added, that Don Alvaro designed to conduct the lady to Lapari in the island of Sardinia, where he had a relation possessed of sufficient authority to ensure him a safe asylum.

This communication somewhat alleviated the despair of Don Fabrique and his friend. They left the wounded man in the house of Donna Rosaura, where he soon after died, and returned to Valencia to consider the steps which they ought to take; nor were they long in coming to the resolution to pursue their common enemy, and attack him in his chosen retreat. They soon after embarked together at Denia, without attendants, and sailed for Port Mahon, in the expectation of there finding an opportunity to proceed to Sardinia. In fact, they had no sooner reached Port Mahon, than they found a vessel about to weigh anchor for Cagliari, in which they immediately secured their passage.

They set sail with a very favourable breeze; but when they had proceeded a few leagues on their voyage, they were becalmed, and the wind having changed in the night, they were obliged to tack, in the hope of its moving into a more friendly quarter. In this manner they sailed on for three days; on the fourth, early in the afternoon, they discovered a vessel,

which approached in full sail. They at first supposed it to be a merchant-vessel, but seeing that it approached almost within cannon-shot without hoisting colours, they no longer had any doubt that it was a corsair, in which opinion they were not mistaken. It was a pirate vessel, belonging to Tunis. At first the infidels imagined that their intended prey would surrender without a struggle; but when they saw the cannon pointed, and every preparation made for battle, they concluded that they had a serious business on hand. They furled their sails, and cleared their deck for action.

The battle began with a brisk cannonade, in which the Christians seemed to have the advantage, till an Algerian ship, larger and better armed than either of the combatants, made her appearance, and approaching the Spanish vessel in full sail, placed her between two fires. At this unexpected attack, the crew of the latter lost all hope; and not venturing to continue so unequal a contest, ceased their fire. The Algerian then hailed them, by the mouth of a slave, who shouted to them in Spanish, that if they wished for quarter, they must strike to the Algerian flag. The Turkish flag, of green silk, sprinkled with silver crescents, was then hoisted. Considering all further resistance as useless, the Christians no longer attempted a defence. They abandoned themselves to all the grief which the prospect of slavery must excite in the breast of freemen; and the commander, apprehending that a longer delay might irritate their barbarian conquerors, lowered his colours, and threw himself with some of his crew into a boat, to yield himself prisoner to the Algerian captain. On the other hand, the latter despatched a party of his crew to board the Spanish vessel, or, in other words to pillage it thoroughly. The Tunisian corsair showed no less alacrity in pursuing the same course, so that the passengers in this unlucky vessel were disarmed and stripped in a moment. They were then removed into the Algerian ship, where they were divided by lot between the two conquerors.

It would have been some consolation to Mendoza and his friend, if fortune had delivered them into the hands of the same master. The weight of their chains would have been more endurable, if they could have borne them together. But, as if they were doomed to all the aggravation of which their condition was susceptible, Don Fabrique became the slave of the Tunisian rover, and Don Juan fell to the share of the Algerian. It would be difficult to describe the despair of these friends, when they were compelled to part. They threw themselves at the feet of the pirates, conjuring them not to tear them asunder. But these Turks, whose barbarian cruelty was proof against the most affecting scenes, were not to be persuaded. On the contrary, as they had reason to believe these two captives were persons of some consequence, and might pay a considerable ransom, they resolved that one should be assigned to each of the victors.

The unfortunate cavaliers, perceiving that they were endeavouring to make an impression on hearts wholly destitute of feeling, looked mournfully at each other, and expressed in their countenances the depth of their affliction. But when the partition of the spoil was completed, and the Tunisian pirate prepared to return to his vessel with the share of plunder allotted to him, it seemed as if the two friends would have died in the paroxysm of their grief; Mendoza ran to the Toledan, locked him in his arms, and exclaimed, "Must we then be separated? What a dreadful necessity! The audacity of that infamous ravisher must escape with impunity, and we are even forbidden to unite our sorrow and despair. Ah, Don Juan, how have we so offended, that the vengeance of heaven should fall so heavily upon us?" "We need not seek far for the cause of our misfortunes," replied Don Juan; "the death of the two culprits whom I sacrificed to my revenge, however excusable in the eyes of men, has, no doubt, excited the Divine indignation, which pursues you also, as guilty of entertaining a friendly feeling towards a wretch, for whose punishment justice loudly calls."

Whilst they thus conversed, they wept so profusely, and were so violently agitated, that the other slaves were scarcely less affected by the sight, than by their own peculiar sufferings. But the Tunisian sailors, more barbarous, if possible, than their masters, finding that Mendoza was tardy in leaving the ship, dragged him brutally from the arms of the Toledan, and hurried him along, loading him all the while with blows. "Adieu, my dear friend," he cried, "I shall never see you more; Donna Rosaura is not avenged! The evils which these wretches can inflict upon me will be the lightest portion of my slavery."

Don Juan could make no reply. The manner in which he saw his friend treated had such an effect upon him, as to deprive him of the power of speech. As the order of our history requires us to follow the fortunes of the Toledan, we shall for the present leave Don Fabrique, proceeding on his way to Tunis.

The Algerian robber steered for his own harbour, where, immediately on his arrival, he carried his new slaves to the Pacha, and thence to the market-place, where it was the custom to offer them for sale. An officer of the Dey Mezomorto purchased Don Juan for his master, by whom he was sent to work in the gardens of the seraglio. Although this occupation was laborious enough to a man of his rank and habits, yet Don Juan found some consolation in the solitude which his work required, and in which he delighted. In the situation he was placed in, nothing could be more agreeable to him than the liberty of brooding over his misfortunes. Upon these his mind dwelt without intermission; and far from making any effort to detach itself from melancholy reflections, seemed to take increasing pleasure in recalling them again and again.

As he happened one day to be working in the garden, singing all the

while a melancholy song, the Dey, unseen by him, passed near and paused to listen. He was pleased with his voice, and from a momentary impulse of curiosity, approached and inquired his name. The Toledan informed him that he was called Alvaro. When he became the slave of the Dey, he had, according to the custom of persons in those circumstances, assumed a feigned name, and had selected this, because from the impression which the abduction of his mistress by Don Alvaro Ponce had made upon his mind, it occurred to him sooner than any other. Mezomorto, who understood the Spanish language tolerably well, put several questions to him respecting the manners of that country, and particularly as to the mode in which lovers endeavoured to make their addresses agreeable to the objects of their affection. To these inquiries Don Juan replied in a manner which was very satisfactory to the Dey.

"Alvaro," said the latter to him, "you seem to me to possess an intelligent mind, and to belong to a superior rank; but whoever you may really be, you have had the good fortune to please your master, and I wish to honour you with a mark of my confidence." At these words Don Juan threw himself at the feet of the Dey, and having kissed the hem of his garment, and pressed it to his eyes and his head rose and waited his commands. "As a commencement of the trust I mean to repose in you," said the Dey, "I must first inform you, that I have in my seraglio some of the handsomest women in Europe. Amongst the rest, there is one who surpasses all her competitors. I do not believe that the Grand Signor himself possesses so perfect a beauty, although his vessels bring him every day new contributions from every quarter of the world. Her countenance is like the reflection of the sun, and her mien reminds the spectator of the stem of the rose planted in the garden of Eram. You see that I am enchanted with her charms. But this miracle of nature, possessed of all these attractions, is buried in a deep melancholy, which neither time nor my attentions can dispel. Although fortune has placed her in my power, I have put no force upon her inclinations. I have restrained my passion, and, contrary to the custom of princes in such circumstances, who seek only for sensual gratifications, I have applied myself to win her love by the greatest indulgence, and by a profound respect which the meanest Mussulman would scorn to show to a Christian slave. Yet all my efforts tend only to aggravate her despair, and I begin to be weary of the contest. The idea of slavery makes no such deep impression on the mind of others; my favour has always succeeded in effacing it. This obstinate depression exhausts my patience. Yet before I determine to adopt another course, I wish to make one effort more, and with that view to avail myself of your mediation. As she is of the Christian faith, and a native of your country, she may perhaps repose confidence in you, and thus enable you to exercise a beneficial influence over her. Set before her the splendour of my rank and wealth. Inform her that I will raise her far above my other slaves. If everything

else fails, lead her to hope that she may one day even aspire to be the wife of Mezomorto; and assure her that I shall hold her in greater esteem, than if she were a Sultana bestowed upon me by the hand of the Grand Signor himself."

Don Juan prostrated himself a second time at the feet of his master, and although inwardly annoyed at the duty that was required from him, assured him that he would use every exertion to bring the matter to a successful issue. "It is enough," said Mezomorto; "leave your work and follow me. Though contrary to our customs, I shall admit you to an interview with this beautiful captive. But beware how you abuse my confidence. Torments unknown even to the Turks, would be the result of such temerity. Endeavour to dissipate her gloom, and remember that your liberty is gained when I am relieved from this perplexity." Don Juan quitted his work and followed the Dey, who had gone before to prepare the afflicted captive to receive his new intercessor.

He found his beautiful prisoner attended only by two female slaves, and these disappeared as soon as they saw the Dey approach. She received him with every mark of respect, but could not refrain from shuddering, which indeed was the case whenever he came into her presence. He perceived her emotion, and addressed her in an encouraging tone: "Amiable captive," said he, "I visit you for the purpose of informing you, that I find amongst my slaves a person of your nation, with whom, perhaps, it would give you pleasure to have an interview. If you have any desire to see him, I will give him permission to attend you, when you can converse with him if you please, even without the presence of witnesses." Being assured by the beautiful slave that his offer was received with gratitude, "I will immediately send him to you," said the Dey; "I shall be delighted if your melancholy should find any relief in his company." With these words he left the room, and meeting the Toledan, who had just arrived, he said to him in a low voice, "You may go in, and after your interview, you will come to my apartment, and give me an account of what passes between you."

Zarata accordingly advanced, and opening the door, saluted the lady, without raising his eyes from the ground; and she, on the other hand, received his salutation without observing him very attentively; but when after a few moments they looked at each other more earnestly, they simultaneously uttered a cry of surprise and of joy. "O heavens!" cried the Toledan, "is it not an empty vision that deceives my eyes? Is it in truth Donna Rosaura that I see?" "Ah! Don Juan," replied the fair captive, "can it be you who speak to me?" "Yes," replied he, tenderly kissing her hand, "it is himself. Recognise me and my love in these tears, which my eyes, overjoyed at the sight of you, cannot refrain from shedding. In these transports of pleasure, which your presence alone is capable of exciting, I no longer exclaim against fortune, since she has restored you to my arms. But whither is this excess of joy hurrying my thoughts? I forget that you

are in chains. Through what new caprice of fate are you placed in this situation? How were you enabled to extricate yourself from the power of the rash Don Alvaro? What anxiety have I suffered! How I tremble to hear that virtue may not have found timely aid from heaven!" "Heaven," replied Donna Rosaura, "has amply avenged me upon Don Alvaro Ponce. If I had time to inform you —" "You have sufficient leisure," interrupted Don Juan. "The Dey permits me to remain with you, and, what you will be surprised to hear, to converse with you without restraint. Let us avail ourselves of these fortunate moments; tell me all that has occurred from the time of your abduction to the present moment." "How have you learned," replied she, "that Don Alvaro was the person who carried me off?" "I am but too well informed on that point," rejoined Don Juan; and he then related in a few words the way in which that fact came to his knowledge, and how Mendoza and himself, having embarked for the purpose of rescuing her, and punishing the ravisher, had been made prisoners by the corsairs. When his narrative was finished, Donna Rosaura pursued her story in the following words: —

"I need not tell you that my surprise was great indeed when I found myself in the power of a troop of masked ruffians. I fainted away in the arms of the man who was carrying me, and when I recovered my senses, which did not happen for a considerable time, I found myself alone with Inez, one of my women, far out at sea, in the cabin of a vessel, which was pursuing her voyage in full sail.

"My attendant began to exhort me to be patient under this calamity; and from the drift of her conversation, I had reason to suspect that she was in league with my enemy. He dared to introduce himself to me, and throwing himself at my feet, 'I beseech you, madam,' he cried, 'to forgive Don Alvaro for employing the only means in his power to possess himself of you. You know the devotion I have paid to you, and with what a perfect attachment I contended with Don Fabrique for the prize of your approbation, up to the day when you declared your preference of him. If my passion for you had been of an ordinary description, I might have subdued it, and consoled myself elsewhere for my ill fortune; but fate has destined me to admire only your charms. Despised as I am, I am unable to emancipate myself from their influence. Yet fear nothing from the violence of my love. I have not been guilty of this attempt upon your liberty to subject your virtue to more unworthy outrage; and it is my ardent hope, that in the retirement to which I am now conducting you, an eternal and sacred bond may unite our fate for ever.' To this he added many other speeches, which I cannot now recall to mind; but from what he said, he seemed to think, that to compel me to marry him was by no means a tyrannical act, and that I ought rather to regard him as an impassioned lover, than as an insolent ravisher.

"During this address, I did nothing but weep and abandon myself to

my grief. He therefore left me to myself, without losing further time in vain persuasions; but, as he retired, I saw a sign of intelligence pass between him and Inez, from which I collected that he desired her to support with all her dexterity the arguments which he had been addressing to me.

"Inez did not fail to obey her instructions; she represented to me how necessary it was, after the publicity of my departure with him, to bestow my hand upon him, and sacrifice, to the preservation of my reputation, the feelings of my heart. To set before my eyes the prospect of such a detestable alliance, was not the way to assuage my grief, which I consequently indulged without restraint. Inez no longer knew what topics of consolation to suggest; but at this moment we heard a great uproar on deck, which attracted all our attention.

"This tumult amongst the retainers of Don Alvaro was occasioned by the appearance of a large vessel, which was approaching us in full sail; escape was impossible, as the stranger far outsailed us. As he drew near, he hailed us, and ordered us to send a boat on board, but Don Alvaro and his people, preferring death to submission, desperately resolved on fighting. The contest was furious; without describing it more particularly, it will suffice to say that it terminated in the destruction of Don Alvaro and all his crew, after every effort of desperate courage had been exerted in vain. We found that the large vessel, into which we were now transported, belonged to Mezomorto, and was commanded by Aby Aly Osman, one of his officers.

"Aby Aly, on his first interview with me, surveyed me for some time with attention, and perceiving that I was a Spaniard, he addressed me in the Castilian language: — 'Moderate your grief,' he said, 'be not too much afflicted by the unfortunate occurrence which has made you a slave. Unfortunate, do I call it? I should say that it is a happy incident, on which you should congratulate yourself. Beauty like yours was not intended to exercise a narrow empire over the Christian world alone. Heaven did not form you for the pleasure of that contemptible race. You are worthy of the love of the masters of the world; the Mussulmans alone are worthy of you. I shall without delay turn my course towards Algiers, for although I have not taken any other prize, I am convinced that the Dey, my master, will be satisfied with my conduct. He will unquestionably applaud the eagerness I shall have shown to place in his hands a beauty, who will be the delight of his heart, and the great ornament of his harem.

"At this address, which explained to me all the wretchedness of my situation, I redoubled my lamentations; but Aby Aly, who looked upon the subject of my fears in a very different light, only laughed at my cries, and steered for Algiers, while I indulged my grief without any restraint. At one time I addressed my passionate supplications to Heaven, and implored its aid; at another, I wished and hoped that we might be overtaken by some Christian vessel, or that the waves would swallow us up. Vain

expectations! we arrived without any accident at the port, and I was conducted to this palace, where I was presented to Mezomorto.

"As they spoke in the Turkish language, I could not understand the address of Aby Aly to his master on introducing me to him, nor the reply of the latter; but I collected from the gestures and looks of the Dey, that I was so unfortunate as to please him, and the discourse which he afterwards addressed to me in Spanish, confirmed my suspicions and completed my wretchedness.

"I threw myself at his feet, and offered any ransom he would name, but in vain. The offer of all my property could not tempt his avarice; he valued my person, he said, above all the riches of the earth. This apartment, the most magnificent in the palace, was prepared for me, and from that time to the present, the Dey has tried every means to dispel the melancholy which overwhelms me. He brings to me all the slaves of both sexes, who excel in singing or playing on any instrument. He has removed Inez, under the impression that she encouraged my gloomy thoughts, and I am waited upon by old slaves, who continually talk to me about the love their master entertains for me, and the endless pleasures that are reserved for me.

"All these attempts to divert my grief have produced only a contrary effect; nothing can afford me any consolation. A prisoner in this detestable palace, which never ceases to re-echo the cries of injured innocence, I suffer less from the loss of my liberty, than from the odious tenderness which the Dey professes for me. It is true that I have hitherto found in him only a submissive and respectful lover; but this does not divest me of an apprehension that, tired of a constraint to which he is unaccustomed, he may at last abuse his power. I am incessantly haunted by this dreadful fear, and every instant of my life brings with it a new pang."

Donna Rosaura could not finish her recital, without giving way to her tears. Don Juan was deeply moved. "It is not without reason, Madam," said he, "that your fancy represents to you the future in such frightful shapes. I am as much terrified as yourself. The assumed delicacy of the Dey is likely to be dismissed sooner than you might suppose. The gentle adorer will soon throw aside his pretended mildness. I am well assured of this, and see all the danger to which you are exposed. But," he continued, with an altered voice, "I shall not be a quiet witness. Slave as I am, my despair is to be dreaded. Before you shall suffer any indignity from Mezomorto, I will plunge my dagger into his bosom." "Ah, Don Juan," interrupted the lady, "what design do you meditate? I implore you not to yield to such rash thoughts. With what barbarities would his death be avenged! with what frightful torments! I shudder to think of them. And, after all, you would only expose yourself to a useless danger. By taking away the life of the Dey, would you restore me to liberty? Alas! I should perhaps be sold to some brutal master, who would treat me with less con-

sideration than Mezomorto has shown. Oh! heaven, it is thy justice that I implore; the wickedness of the tyrant's heart is known to thee. Thy word forbids me to release myself by my own hand, and it becomes thy province to prevent a crime which is hateful to thee."

"Yes," replied Zarata, "and heaven will prevent it. I already feel its inspirations. The project which at this moment suggests itself to me, is no doubt prompted by a superior power. The Dey has permitted me to speak to you, in order that I might persuade you to return his love. I must give him an account of what passes between us. In such an emergency, I must have recourse to dissimulation. I shall report to him that you are not inconsolable; that the treatment you have met from him begins to soothe your affliction, and that if he perseveres, he may hope for the most favourable result. You, on your part, will second my endeavours. When he next waits upon you, you will let him find you looking more than usually cheerful, and you will appear to take some degree of interest in his conversation."

"What constraint," interrupted Donna Rosaura. "How can a mind like mine, simple and sincere, succeed in such an attempt? And what benefit can we expect from such hateful deceit?" "The Dey," replied he, "will be delighted with the change, and will wish to complete his conquest. In the meantime, I will use every exertion to effect your deliverance. The task, I own, is difficult, but I am acquainted with an ingenious fellow-slave, whose assistance will, I hope, be of the greatest use to us." "It is enough," replied Rosaura; "I will do all that you desire, since my misfortunes leave me no alternative. Go, Don Juan, exert all your faculties in rescuing me from this dreadful situation. It will be an additional happiness to me, to owe my liberty to you."

Pursuant to the orders of Mezomorto, the Toledan repaired to him to give him an account of his embassy. "Sir," said he to him, "you will not be compelled to have recourse to violence for the gratification of your desires. It appears to me, that this haughty Spaniard will soon, like others, be reconciled to her situation. I may even say, that her fetters have already begun to press lightly upon her. All that is necessary is, that you should cultivate this favourable temper. If you continue to demonstrate the same affectionate respect for your beautiful captive, I have no doubt that in a short time she will yield to your wishes, and forget in your arms the liberty she once desired."

"You delight me with this intelligence," cried the Dey; "but are you not deceiving me, or are you not yourself mistaken? I will see her immediately, and learn whether her eyes confirm the flattering indications which you have remarked." He went accordingly to visit Donna Rosaura; and the Toledan returned to the garden, where he found the gardener, whom he had mentioned to her as the slave whose services might prove effectual in restoring her to liberty. The name of this man was Francisco.

He was well acquainted with Algiers, having served several masters before he passed into the hands of the Dey. "Francisco, my friend," said Don Juan, "you see me greatly afflicted. I find there is in the palace a Valencian lady of the first quality. She has requested Mezomorto to name himself the amount of her ransom but he is enamoured of her, and will not allow her to be set at liberty."

"And why should that give you so much concern?" replied Francisco. "Because we are natives of the same city," answered Don Juan; "her parents and mine are intimate friends, and there is nothing I would not do to contribute to her escape." "That would be no easy matter," observed Francisco, "but I would venture to say I could accomplish it, if the relations of the lady were disposed to reward the service well." "There is no doubt of that," replied Don Juan; "I will answer for their gratitude, and, above all, for her own. She is named Rosaura, and is the widow of a gentleman who has left her great wealth, nor is she less generous than rich. In one word, I am a Spaniard and a nobleman, and my assurance ought to satisfy you."

"Well," said the gardener, "on the strength of your promise I will go in search of a renegade, and propose it to him." "How!" interrupted the Toledan with surprise, "Do you mean to confide in a wretch who was not ashamed to renounce his faith?" "Renegade as he is," interrupted Francisco in his turn, "he is not the less a worthy man. He appears to me to be rather an object of pity than of hatred, and I should say he was excusable, if any circumstances could excuse such a crime. His story is short.

"He is a native of Barcelona, and a surgeon by profession. When he found that he did not succeed as he could have wished at Barcelona, he determined to remove to Cartagena, in the hope that a change of residence might induce an alteration in his fortunes. He embarked therefore for Cartagena with his mother, but they fell in with an Algerian pirate, who took them and brought them to this town. They were both sold — the mother to a Moor, and himself to a Turk; from whom he experienced such barbarity, that he embraced the Mahometan faith, in order at once to put an end to his own sufferings, and to procure the release of his mother, who, as he knew, was treated with great severity by the Moor, her master. He then entered into the service of the Dey, and made several voyages, by which he acquired some wealth. Part of this he applied to the ransom of his mother, and the rest he proposed to turn to account, by trying his fortune on the sea. He became captain of a vessel, and with some soldiers who agreed to attach themselves to him, he began to cruise between Alicante and Cartagena. He returned loaded with booty, and his subsequent enterprises succeeded so well, that he was enabled at length to arm a large ship, and make considerable prizes. But his good fortune at last deserted him. He attacked a French frigate, which gave him so rude a reception, that he was hardly able to regain the port of Algiers. In this place the

merit of pirates is determined by the degree of their success, and the renegade, after this reverse, fell into universal contempt. This disgusted him. He sold his ship, and retired to a house in the suburbs, where he has since resided, living on the remains of his property, with his mother and a few slaves.

"I frequently call upon him, for we are good friends, and he discloses to me his inmost thoughts. A few days since he told me, with tears in his eyes, that he had had no peace since he renounced his faith; and that he felt strongly inclined to trample upon the turban, at the risk of being burned alive, that, by a public exhibition of his repentence, he might make some amends for the crime he had committed.

"This is the character of the renegade," continued Francisco, "to whom I am about to apply, and I think we have nothing to fear from a man of this description. Under the pretext of going to the baths, I will now proceed to his house, and represent to him, that, instead of nourishing feelings of useless regret for having abandoned the church, he should consider how he may restore himself to her bosom. I shall then suggest that he might equip a vessel, as if he was weary of an inactive life, and wished to rove the sea again; and that by this conveyance we may reach the coast of Valencia, where Donna Rosaura will enable him to pass the rest of his days in peace."

Don Juan was enraptured with the prospect which the scheme of Francisco developed to him. "Yes, yes," he exclaimed, "my dear friend, you may promise everything to the renegade. Depend upon it, you shall both be rewarded beyond your expectations." "There may be difficulties," replied Francisco, "in executing our project, but I augur well of our success, and I hope on my return to bring you happy news."

He then proceeded on his mission, and was expected with much impatience by the Toledan, to whom he soon communicated the result of his interview. It was agreed that the renegade should purchase a small vessel, completely equipped, which he should man with his own slaves; that to obviate suspicion, he should engage some Turkish soldiers, as if he actually meditated a cruise, but that two days before the time fixed for their departure, he should embark with his slaves at night, weigh anchor silently, and take up the fugitives at a little gate of the garden opening on the sea.

How great was Zarata's joy to be able to convey such encouraging assurances to Donna Rosaura! He hastened to obtain permission to see her, and with this view on the following day prostrated himself before Mezomorto, and found him charmed with the advances he had apparently made in his captive's good opinion. Don Juan professed to be greatly pleased with this result; and to improve the favourable impression already made, was again allowed to converse with the lady, whom he was thus enabled to apprise of the projected attempt of the renegade and Francisco, and of the promises he had held out to them, if they conducted it to a prosperous issue.

Great was the delight of the afflicted lady, when she was informed that such measures were concerted for her deliverance. "Is it possible," she exclaimed in the excess of her joy, "that there is a shadow of hope that I may once more see Valencia, my own dear native land! What happiness, after so many dangers and alarms, to live there in peace with you. Ah, Don Juan, how sweet is that thought to my mind; but do you participate in its pleasures? Do you consider, that in rescuing me from the power of the Dey, it is your own wife whom you save?"

"Alas," replied Zarata, heaving a profound sigh, "with what rapture should I hear such words from your mouth, if the remembrance of my unhappy friend did not interfere to poison all my pleasure. This is a sentiment which you cannot but forgive, nor can you deny that Mendoza is deserving of your pity. For your sake he quitted Valencia, and lost his liberty; and I am convinced that, enslaved as he is at Tunis, he suffers less from his chains than from the reflection that he has failed to avenge you."

"He deserved no doubt a better fate," said Donna Rosaura. "I call heaven to witness that I am grateful for all that he has done for me; I greatly regret the misfortunes into which I have innocently led him, but I shall never be able to prevail on my heart to reward him with its affections."

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of the slaves, who waited on Donna Rosaura, and Don Juan took his leave. Nothing occurred to interfere with the plan of the renegade, who bought a small vessel, tolerably well equipped, and hastened the preparations for his departure. In the meantime, Don Juan had again seen the fair captive and apprised her of the time when the ship would be ready. A window of her apartment opened on the garden, and from this it was arranged that the lady should descend, with the help of a ladder, which the confederates were to bring. Eager was the impatience with which she awaited the important night. At length it came, and by good fortune proved to be dark and gloomy. At the appointed moment, Don Juan placed the ladder under the window, from which the lady descended with much hurry and agitation, but in safety. Leaning on the arm of her courageous friend, they turned their steps towards the little door of the garden, which opened on the sea. They proceeded with as much speed as possible, and were already anticipating the pleasure of finding themselves at liberty, when fortune, still hostile to these unfortunate lovers, overwhelmed them with a misfortune, more difficult to be guarded against, and more painful to endure, than the worst of those which had hitherto afflicted them.

They had already left the garden, and were hastening along the shore towards the boat, which was waiting for them, when a man, whom they supposed to be one of the companions of their flight, and of whom they had no distrust, rushed on Don Juan, with his sword in his hand, and

plunging it in his bosom, exclaimed, "Perfidious Alvaro Ponce, it is thus that Don Fabrique de Mendoza ought to take his revenge on a dastardly ravisher. A wretch like thee deserves not a fair encounter." The Toledan, yielding to the force of the unexpected blow, fell to the ground, and at the same moment, Donna Rosaura, whom he had supported, overcome at once with astonishment, fear, and grief, fainted at his side. "Ah, Mendoza," exclaimed Don Juan, "what have you done? Do you not know me? You have killed your friend. But I die content, since I can now restore to your arms your beloved Donna Rosaura, who can bear witness for me, that my attachment to you has never abated." "Gracious powers!" cried Don Fabrique, "is it possible I have destroyed my friend? But he shall not die alone; the same weapon shall punish his murderer. My ignorance may be some excuse for my crime, but cannot reconcile me to life." With these words, he turned the point of his sword against his own bosom, drove it to the hilt, and fell on the body of Don Juan, who had fainted away, not more from loss of blood, than from horror at the sight of his friend's desperation.

Francisco and the renegade, who were waiting at a little distance, and who had their private reasons for not advancing to the succor of the supposed Don Alvaro, were much astonished at hearing the last words of Don Fabrique; and observing the action which accompanied them, they perceived that there had been some misunderstanding, and that the wounded cavaliers were affectionate friends, and not sworn enemies, as they had believed. They then hastened to their assistance, but finding them all without sense or motion, they were at a loss what course to pursue. Francisco was of opinion, that they should carry off the lady, and leave the cavaliers on the shore, where, to all appearance, they must soon expire, if they were not already dead. But this was opposed by the renegade, who would not consent to abandon the wounded, whose injuries might not prove mortal; and it was resolved that they should be carried to the vessel, where the renegade, who had not forgotten his old profession, and still possessed his instruments, undertook to dress their wounds. In a few minutes they had all embarked; and while some got the vessel under sail, and spread all their canvas, the others, with fervent prayers, implored the favour of heaven on their adventure, with all the earnestness which could be inspired by the liveliest apprehension of being pursued by the galleys of Mezomorto.

After having committed the management of the vessel to a French slave, in whose skill and experience he could confide, the renegade directed his attention in the first instance to Donna Rosaura. He succeeded in restoring her to her senses; and his remedies had so favourable an effect on Don Fabrique and the Toledan, that they also soon revived. Donna Rosaura, who had fainted on seeing the blow which Don Juan received, was much surprised to see Mendoza in the vessel; she easily conjectured,

on seeing his condition, that he had wounded himself in a fit of remorse for the injury he had inflicted on his friend, but even this circumstance could not induce her to look upon him in any other light, than as the assassin of the man she adored.

After some time spent in silence, equally sorrowful and affecting, Don Fabrique, in a feeble tone, addressed the object of all his desires. "Before I die, Madam," said he, "I have at least the satisfaction of seeing you released from slavery. Would to heaven that you had been indebted to me for your liberty; but it has pleased Providence that the lover whom you prefer should lay you under that obligation. I love my rival too much to complain of this, and I earnestly hope that the wound which I have been so unfortunate as to give him, will not prevent him from receiving the reward he has a right to expect from your gratitude." To this address the lady made no reply; far from showing any concern for the deplorable fate of Don Fabrique, she could not disguise the feelings of displeasure excited by the state to which he had reduced her beloved Don Juan.

The surgeon now proceeded to probe and dress the wounds of the two friends. He found that Zarata was not dangerously hurt, the weapon having only glided under the left breast, without injuring any vital part. This report of the surgeon diminished the sorrow of Donna Rosaura, and was received by Don Fabrique with the greatest pleasure. He turned towards the lady,—"I am content," said he, "I leave the world without regret, since my friend's recovery is certain; I shall not now die loaded with your hatred."

He pronounced these words with so touching a tone, that Donna Rosaura was moved. Her enmity to Don Fabrique disappeared with her fears for Don Juan, and seeing only in the former a man who merited all her sympathy, she entreated him to think only of restoring himself to health, assuring him that if she could not render him happy, she would at least not confer her hand on another, but would imitate Don Juan in the sacrifice which he made of his love to his friendship. Don Fabrique would have replied, but the surgeon, apprehensive that the effort might injure him, enjoined silence, and examined his wound; this he conceived to be mortal, the sword having pierced the upper lobe of the lungs, which was sufficiently evident from the alarming loss of blood. As soon as he had applied the first dressings, he left the two patients to repose in the cabin on two beds placed side by side, and he removed Donna Rosaura, whose presence might prove injurious to them.

In spite of these precautions, Mendoza was seized with fever, and about the close of day the hemorrhage increased. The surgeon then thought it proper to inform him, that the evil was beyond remedy, and that if he had anything to say to his friend or to the lady, he had no time to lose. This intimation was received by the Toledan with great

agitation; by Don Fabrique himself with indifference. He expressed a wish to see Donna Rosaura, who repaired to his bedside in a state more easy to conceive than describe; her face was bathed in tears, and her sobs excited deep emotion in the breast of the unhappy Mendoza. "Shed not those precious tears for me, Madam," he feebly said, "pray be composed, and listen to me; I entreat the same of you, my dear friend. I know this separation is a severe blow to you, for your friendship has stood the severest test; yet delay a little, till I leave you, to honour my memory with so many touching marks of your tenderness and compassion. Indeed I feel it more keenly than the loss of life itself. Hear by what strange accidents fate brought me to this fatal shore, now stained with the blood of my friend and with my own. You will naturally inquire how I came to mistake Don Juan for Don Alvaro; and this, if time be permitted, I will explain before my death. A few hours after the vessel, in which I was, had left that in which Don Juan sailed, we met a French corsair, which attacked us. It made itself master of the Tunis vessel, and landed us near to Alicante. No sooner was I free, than I bethought myself of ransoming my friend. For this purpose I repaired to Valencia, where I got the money, and hearing that at Barcelona the holy fraternity for redeeming captives was on the point of setting sail for Algiers, I hastened thither. Before leaving Valencia, however, I entreated the Governor, Don Francisco de Mendoza, my uncle, to employ his influence with the court of Spain to obtain the pardon of Zarata, whom I intended to take with me and reinstate in the enjoyment of his property, which had been confiscated since the death of the Duke de Naxera.

"On arriving at Algiers I repaired to the slave-mart; but in vain there, and everywhere, did I seek the object of whom I was in search. I met, indeed, the Catalonian renegade, to whom this vessel belongs; and I recognized him as a servant who had formerly lived with my uncle. I informed him of my purpose, and requested that he would unite with me in making the strictest search. 'I am sorry,' he replied, 'that I can be of no use to you. I am going to leave Algiers this night with a Valencian lady, the slave of the Dey.'

"'And what is her name?' I inquired. 'She goes by the name of Rosaura,' was the answer.

"The astonishment evinced in my countenance convinced the renegade, that I was deeply interested in the matter. He then told me of a design he had formed to free her from captivity; and as he alluded to the slave Alvaro, I had no doubt but it was Alvaro Ponce himself. 'Aid me to accomplish an act of vengeance,' I cried with vehemence; 'it is rightful and just.'

"'You shall soon be satisfied,' replied the renegade; 'but inform me of your cause of complaint.'

"I explained it fully, and when he had heard it, 'It is enough,' he

said; 'come with me to-night, I will point out your rival, and when you have punished him, you shall take his place, and escort Donna Rosaura along with us to Valencia.'

"My impatience, nevertheless, did not make me unmindful of Don Juan: I left money for his ransom in the hands of an Italian merchant, named Francesco Capati, a resident at Algiers, who promised to fulfil my wishes. Night at last came; I went to the house of the renegade, who guided me to the sea-shore. We stopped before a little gate, from which there issued a man, who came directly towards us, and pointing to another man and woman who followed him, he said: 'Here are Alvaro and Donna Rosaura.' At this sight I grew altogether frantic; I drew my sword, I ran towards the unhappy Alvaro, in the idea that it was a hateful rival whom I saw. But, thanks to heaven," he continued, "my error will not affect his life, nor prove an unceasing source of tears and regret to the excellent Rosaura."

"Ah! Mendoza," interrupted the lady, "you do not appreciate my affliction; I shall never recover the sad event of losing you; even should I espouse your friend, it would but be to unite our grief and regrets together. Your love, your friendship, your misfortunes, would be the sole topic of our discourse."

"It is more than I merit that you should so long regret me; it is my wish that my friend should espouse you, when he shall have avenged your wrongs."

"Don Alvaro lives no more!" exclaimed the widow of Cifuentes; "he was killed on the very day when he carried me off, by the corsair who captured me."

"Lovely Rosaura," replied Mendoza, "these tidings give me much pleasure; my friend will the sooner be happy for them. Indulge your mutual attachment. I am glad to think the sole remaining obstacle to your wishes is about to be removed. May all your days run in a pleasing and quiet tenor, blest in a union which neither jealousy nor fortune can disturb. Farewell, Rosaura; and farewell, my Juan; do not forget sometimes to think of me — of one who has never loved anything on earth with the devotion that he loved you!"

While the gentle lady and the knight of Toledo mingled their tears at these touching words, Don Fabrique, who saw their grief, as he felt fast sinking into death, faintly whispered: "I must, by my own, add to your natural and kind expression of grief; death is on me, — I have nothing but to supplicate the Divine mercy for cutting short a life that heaven only had the right to dispose of." Saying these words, he raised his eyes to heaven, and in a few moments all was over.

Don Juan was no sooner aware of the fact, than in utter despair he tried to tear open his wound; but the renegade and Francisco were near, and prevented him. Rosaura, terrified at his violence, united her

efforts to theirs to mitigate his anguish. She did this in so affecting a manner, that he could not resist the appeal; he let them re-dress his wound; and at length the feelings of the lover began to throw a calm over those of the friend. Yet, with the return of reason, his sorrow was not less poignant; it resembled only the calmness of despair.

The renegade, among other precious articles which he was bearing with him to Spain, had some fine balm and perfume, with which, at the solicitation of the lady and Don Juan, he preserved the body of Mendoza, that they might have the sad pleasure of bestowing on it the honour of sepulture in his own country. The lovers ceased not to lament his fate during the whole of the voyage; but as the wind continued constantly favourable, they were not long before they descried the shores of Spain.

At that sight, all the captives gave vent to the most passionate exclamations of joy; on the vessel entering the port each pursued his particular destination. The widow of Cifuentes, and her lover, sent off letters for the governor and family of Donna Rosaura. Tidings of her return were received by them with joy; and as for Don Francisco de Mendoza, he showed the greatest affliction on hearing of his nephew's death. He shed tears abundantly over the body; every spectator was affected at the scene; and he soon after, turning towards them, inquired by what fearful accident he had met his early fate?

"I will inform you of all," returned the knight of Toledo; "far from wishing to banish it from my memory, I take a sad pleasure in the indulgence of my grief." He then began a recital, which drew tears from every eye; while, on the other hand, the parents of Rosaura congratulated themselves on the almost miraculous manner in which she had been rescued from the tyranny of Mezomorto.

After a general explanation on all points, the body of Don Fabrique was placed in a coach, and conducted to Valencia; but it was not there interred, on account of the viceroyship of Don Francisco being on the eve of expiration. That cavalier, therefore, had it transported to Madrid, to which city he was himself bending his course.

Meanwhile, the widow of Cifuentes lavished the richest presents on Don Francisco and the renegade. The Navarrese returned to his province, and the renegade went with his mother to Barcelona, where he was restored to the true faith, and where he lives in comparative comfort till this day. Don Francisco received a packet from the court, which contained the pardon for Don Juan, which the king was unable to refuse to the united influence of the Mendoza family, spite of the opposition of the house of Naxera. These tidings were the more agreeable to the knight of Toledo, as giving him liberty to accompany the body of his friend, which he could not have otherwise done.

At length the procession set out, with a suite of illustrious personages;

and, on reaching Madrid, the body was interred with every mark of honor, and a grand monument raised to their friend's memory in the church. They did not content themselves with this; they bore deep mourning for him they had lost during the space of a year, as if desirous, with his memory, to perpetuate their sorrow and their friendship.

Having thus shown their respect to him by every mark of attachment in their power, they gave their hearts and hands to each other; but it was long ere Don Juan ceased to cherish the remembrance of his friend with feelings of overpowering melancholy. He often appeared to him in his dreams; and still more often he again witnessed him breathing his last sighs. Yet at length the irresistible tenderness, combined with the many charms possessed by Rosaura, had begun to dissipate his morbid and suffering state of mind. He was just beginning to feel restored to his former health and happiness; a cheerful future seemed to open before him; when one day, in following the chase, to which he was exceedingly attached, he had the misfortune to be severely injured on the head. An abscess formed, to remove which the efforts of art were employed in vain. He died; and that lady whom you behold in the arms of the two females, who attempt to soothe the anguish of her despair, is his unfortunate consort, Rosaura; and, from all appearances, it may not be long before she will rejoin him.

EDUARDO ZAMACOIS

(1878–)

THE following is taken from the introductory note of the English translation of two of Zamacois' stories:

"'I have no biography . . . Oh, yes, I was born, I suppose. We all are. My birth took place in Cuba, in 1878. When I was three, my parents took me to Brussels. I grew up there, and in Spain and Paris. My education — the beginning of it — was given me in Paris and at the University of Madrid. Degree? Well — a *Philosophe ès Lettres*. I much prefer the title of Philosopher of Humanity.'"

Zamacois is one of the most energetic and talented of the younger Spaniards: Socialist, editor, dramatist, novelist and story writer, he has taken an honorable and distinguished part in that revival of Spanish art and literature which is still in process of development.

The story that follows is translated by George Allan England, in the volume *Their Son and The Necklace*, Boni & Liveright, New York, 1919. Copyright, 1919, by Boni & Liveright, Inc., by whose permission it is here reprinted.

THEIR SON

I

AT ABOUT the age of thirty, tired of living all alone with no one to love, Amadeo Zureda got married. This Zureda was a stocky fellow, neither tall nor short, dark, thoughtful, and with a certain slow, sure way of moving. The whole essence of his face, the soul of it — to speak so — was rooted in the taciturn energy of the space between his eyebrows. There you found the man, more than in the rough black mustache which cut across his face; even more than in the thickness of his cheekbones, the squareness of his jaws, the hard solidity of his nose. His brow was somber as an evil memory.

One after the other you might erase all the lines of that face, and so long as you left the thick-tufted brows, you would not have changed the expression of Amadeo Zureda. For there dwelt the whole spirit of the man, reserved yet ardent.

His marriage rescued Rafaela, whom he made his wife, from the slavish toil of a workwoman. Rafaela was just over eighteen, a buxom brunette with big, roguish, black eyes. Her breath was sweet, her lips vivid, her mobile hips full and inviting, like her breasts; and she had a free-and-easy,

energetic, enterprising way of walking. Joined to a kind of untamed grace (just a bit vulgar, in the manner of a daughter of the people), she possessed a certain distinction both of face and manner, of moving, of showing likes and dislikes, that enhanced and exalted her beauty. Her hands were small and well cared for. She liked fine shoes and starched petticoats that frou-froued as she walked.

Her mind resembled her body. It was restless, lively and incapable of keeping the same point of view for very long. When she talked, those coquettish eyes of hers shone brighter than ever, with enjoyment. Her mouth was rather large; her teeth dazzling; and the light of laughter always shone there like an altar-lamp.

Amadeo worshiped her. When he came home at night from work, Rafaela ran to meet him with noisy jubilation and then cuddled herself caressingly on his knees, after he had sat down. All this filled Zureda with ineffable joy, so that he became quite speechless, in ecstasy. At such times even the thoughtful scar of the wrinkle between his brows grew less severe, in the calm gravity of his dark forehead.

The newly married couple took lodgings on the sixth floor of a house not far from the Estación del Norte. The house was new, and their apartment was full of sun and cheer, with big, well-lighted rooms. They had a couple of balconies, too; and these the busy, artistic hands of Rafaela kept smothered in flowers.

Amadeo was a locomotive-engineer. The company liked him well and more than well. During the two years he had been on the Madrid-Bilbao run he had never been called in for reprimand. He was intelligent and a hard worker. Fifteen hours he could stand up to the job, and still see just as clearly as ever with those black, powerful eyes of his. In his corduroys, this muscular, dark-skinned, impassive man reminded you of a bronze.

He was devoted to his job. He had learned engineering in the States, which everybody knows is a master-country for railroading. His parents had both died when he was very young. He had dedicated the whole plenitude of his affections, his sap and vigor as a single man, to his work. Foot by foot he knew the right-of-way from Madrid to Bilbao in its most intimate details, so that he could have made that run blindfolded, just as safely as if he had been walking about his own house. There were clumps of trees, ravines, rivers, hills and farms that, to his eyes, had the decisive meaning of a watch or a map.

"At such-and-such a place," he would think, "I've got to jam the brakes on; there's a downgrade just beyond." Or else: "Here's the bridge. It must be so-and-so o'clock." His grip on such ideas of time and space was always exactly right. He seemed infallible. Zureda knew that all these inanimate objects, scattered along the line, were so many faithful friends incapable of deceiving him.

He shared this fetichistic love of the landscape with the love inspired in

him by his engines. Ordinarily he ran two: No. 187 and No. 1,082. He called the first "Nigger," and the second "Sweetie." Nigger was an intractable brute, ill-tempered and hard-bitted. When she tackled a hill she seemed to quiver with pain, and in her iron belly strange threatening shrieks resounded. She skidded downhill and was hard to get under control. You would have said some wayward spirit was thrashing about inside her, eternally rebelling against all government. She was logy, at times, and hated to start; but once you got her going you had a proper job to stop her. When she rushed in under the black arch of a tunnel, her whistle shrieked with ear-splitting alarum, like a man screeching.

"Sweetie" was a different sort, meek, obedient, strong and good-willed on an up-grade, cautious and full of reserve on a down, when the headlong flight of the train had to be checked.

Twice a week, each time that Amadeo started on a run, his wife always asked him:

"Which machine have you got, to-day?"

If it was "Sweetie," she had nothing to worry about.

"That's all right," she would say. "But the other one! I certainly am afraid of it. It's bad luck, sure!"

Zureda, however, liked to handle both of them. Sometimes he preferred one, sometimes the other, according to the state of his nerves. When his mood was cheerful, he liked "Sweetie" best, because there wasn't much work about running her. He preferred her, usually, on quiet days, when the sun was giving the earth a big, warm kiss. Zureda's fireman was a chap named Pedro; an Andalusian, full of spicy songs and tales. Amadeo rather liked to hear these, always keeping his eyes fixed on blue distances that seemed to smile at him. Out ahead, over the boiler, the rails stretched on and on, shining like silver in the sun. The warm air blew about Zureda, laden with sweet country smells. Under his feet the engineer felt the shuddering of "Sweetie," tame, laborious, neither bucking nor snorting; and at such times, both proud and caressing as if he loved her, he would murmur:

"Get along with you, my pretty lamb!"

At other times the engineer's full-blooded vigor suffered vague irritations and capricious rages, unwholesome disturbances of temper which made him unwilling to talk, and dug still deeper the grim line between his brows. Then it was that he preferred to take out "Nigger." Stubborn, menacing, rebellious against all his demands, the fight she gave him — a fight always potentially dangerous — acted as a sedative to his nerves and seemed to pacify him. At such times Pedro, the Andalusian with the risqué stories and the spicy songs, felt the numbing, evil humor of his engineer, and grew still.

All along the line, chiming into the uproarious quiverings of the engine and the whistling gusts of wind, a long colloquy of hate seemed to develop between the man and the machine. Zureda would grit his teeth and grunt:

"Go on, you dog! Some hill — but you've got to make it! Come on, get to it!"

Then he would fling open the furnace door, burning red as any Hell-pit, and with his own furious hand would fling eight or ten shovels of coal into the firebox. The machine would shudder, as if lashed by punishment. Enraged snorts would fill her; and from her smoking shoulders something like a wave of hate seemed to stream back.

Zureda always came home from trips like these bringing some present or other for his wife; perhaps a pair of corsets, a fur collar, a box of stockings. The wife, knowing just the time when the express would get in, always went out on the balcony to see it pass. Her husband never failed to let her know he was coming, from afar, by blowing a long whistle-blast.

If she were still abed when the train arrived, she would jump up, fling on a few clothes and run to the balcony. Her joyous face would smile out at the world from the green peepholes through the plants in their flowerpots. In a moment or two she could see the train among the wooded masses of Moncloa. On it came with a roar and a rattle, hurling its undulating black body along the polished rails. Joyously the engineer waved his handkerchief at her, from the engine-cab; and only at times like these did his brow — to which no smile ever lent complete contentment — smooth itself out a little and seem almost happy.

Amadeo Zureda desired nothing. His work was hard, but all he needed to make him glad was just the time between runs — two nights a week — that he spent in Madrid. His whole brusque but honest soul took on fresh youth there, under the roof of his peaceful home, surrounded by the simple pieces of furniture that had been bought one at a time. This was all the reward he wanted. The cold that pierced his bones, out there in the storms along the railway-line, gradually changed to a glow of warmth in the caressing arms of his wife. Body and soul both fell asleep there in the comfort of a happy and sensual well-being.

II

It hardly takes more than a couple of years of married life to age a docile man; or at least — about the same thing — to fill him with those forward-looking ideas of caution, economy and peace that sow the seed of fear for the morrow, in quiet souls.

One time Zureda was laid up a while with a bad cold. Getting better of this, the engineer on a momentous night spoke seriously to his wife concerning their future. His bronzed face lying on the whiteness of the pillows brought out the salience of his cheek-bones and the strength of his profile. The vertical furrow between his brows seemed deeper than ever, cut into the serene gravity of his forehead. His wife listened to him attentively, sitting on the edge of the bed, with one leg crossed over the other. She cradled the upper knee between joined hands.

Slowly the engineer's talk unwound itself, to the effect that life is a poor thing at best, constantly surrounded by misfortunes that can strike in an infinitude of ways. To-day it's a cold draft, to-morrow a chill or a sore throat, or maybe a cancer, that death uses to steal our lives away. All about us, yawning like immense jaws, the earth is always opening, the earth into which all of us must some time descend; and in this very swift and savagely universal hecatomb no one can be sure of witnessing both the rising and the setting of the same day.

"I'm not afraid of work, you know," went on Zureda, "but engines are made of iron, and even so they wear out at last and get tired of running. Men are just the same. And when it happens to me, as it's got to, some day, what'll become of us, then?"

Calmly Rafaela shook her head. She by no means shared her husband's fears. No doubt Amadeo's sickness had made him timorous and pessimistic.

"I think you're making it worse than it really is," she answered. "Old age is still a long way off; and, besides, very likely we'll have children to help us."

Zureda's gesture was a negation.

"That don't matter," he replied. "Children may not come at all; and even if they do, what of that? As for old age being far off, you're wrong. Even to-day, do you think I've got the strength and quickness, or even the enjoyment in my work, that I had when I was twenty-five? Not on your life! Old age is certainly coming, and coming fast. So I tell you again we've got to save something.

"If we do, when I can no longer run an engine I'll open a little machine-shop; and if I should die suddenly, leaving you fifteen or twenty thousand *pesetas*, you could easily start a good laundry in some central location, for that's the kind of work you understand."

To all this Zureda added a number of other arguments, discreet and weighty, so that his wife declared herself convinced. The engineer already had a plan laid out, that made him talk this way. Among the people who had come to see him, while he had been sick, was one Manolo Berlanga, whose friendship with him had been brotherly indeed. This Berlanga had a job at a silversmith's shop in the Paseo de San Vincente. He had no relatives, and made rather decent wages. A good many times he had told Zureda how much he wanted to find some respectable house where he could live in a decent, private way, paying perhaps four or five pesetas a day for board and room.

"Suppose, now," went on Amadeo, "that Manolo should pay five pesetas a day; that's thirty *duros* a month — thirty good dollars — and the house costs us eight dollars. Well, that leaves us twenty-two dollars a month, and with that, and a few dollars that I'll put in, we can all live high."

To this Rafaela consented, rather stirred by the new ideas awakened by the innovation. The silversmith was a free-and-easy, agreeable young fellow, who chattered all the time and played the guitar in no mean fashion.

"Yes, but how about a place for him?" asked she. "Is there any? What room could we give him?"

"Why, the little alcove off the dining-room, of course."

"Yes, I was thinking of that, too. But it's mighty small, and there's no light in it."

The engineer shrugged his shoulders.

"It's good enough just to sleep in!" he exclaimed. "If we were dealing with a woman, that would be different. But we men get along any old way, all right."

Rafaela wrote to Berlanga next day, at her husband's request, telling him to come and see them. Promptly on the dot the silversmith arrived. He looked about twenty-eight, wore tightly-belted velveteen trousers gaitered under the shoe, and a dark overcoat with astrakhan collar and cuffs. He was of middle height, lean, pale-faced, with a restless manner, a fluent, witty way of talking. On some pretext or other the wife went out, leaving the two men to chew things over and come to an agreement.

"Now, as for living with you people," said Berlanga, "I'll be very glad to give five pesetas per. Or I'll better that, if you say so."

"No, no, thanks," answered Zureda. "I don't want to be bargaining with you. We can all help each other. You and I are like brothers, anyhow."

That night after supper, Rafaela dragged all the useless furniture out of the dining-room alcove and swept and scoured it clean. Next day she got up early to go to a hard-by pawnshop, where she bought her an iron bed with a spring and a woolen mattress. This bed she carefully set up, and fixed it all fine and soft. A couple of chairs, a washstand and a little table covered with a green baize spread completed the furnishing of the room.

After everything was ready, the young woman dressed and combed herself to receive the guest, who arrived about the middle of the afternoon with his luggage, to wit: a box with his workman's tools, a trunk and a little cask. This cask held a certain musty light wine, which — so Berlanga said, after coffee and one of Zureda's cigars had made him expansive — had been given him by a "lady friend" of his who ran a tavern.

A few days passed, days of unusual pleasure to the engineer and his wife, for the silversmith was a man of joyful moods and very fond of crooking his elbow, so that his naturally fertile conversation became hyperbolically colored and quite Andalusian in its exuberance. At dessert, the merry quips of Berlanga woke sonorous explosions of hilarity in Amadeo. When he laughed, the engineer would lean his massive shoulders against the back

of the chair. Now and again, as if to underscore his bursts of merriment, he would deal the table shrewd blows. After this he would slowly emit his opinions; and if he had to advise Berlanga, he did it in a kind of paternal way, patiently, good-naturedly.

When he was quite well again, Amadeo went back to work. The morning he took leave of his wife, she asked him:

"Which engine have you got, to-day?"

"Nigger," he answered.

"My, what bad luck! I'm afraid something's going to happen to you!"

"Rubbish! Why should it? *I* can handle her!"

He kissed Rafaela, tenderly pressing her against his big, strong breast. At this moment an unwholesome thought, grotesquely cruel, cut his mind like a whip; a thought that he would pass the night awake, out in the storm, in the engine-cab, while there in Madrid another man would be sleeping under the same roof with his wife. But this unworthy suspicion lasted hardly a second. The engineer realized that Berlanga, though a riotous, dissipated chap, was at heart a brotherly friend, far from base enough to betray him in any such horrible manner.

Rafaela went with her husband to the stairway. There they both began again to inflame each other with ardent kisses and embraces of farewell. The wife's black eyes filled with tears as she told him to keep himself well bundled up and to think often of her. Tears quite blinded her.

"What a good lass she is!" murmured Zureda.

And as he recalled the poisonous doubt of a moment before, the man's ingenuous nobility felt shame.

The life of Manolo Berlanga turned out to be pretty disreputable. He liked wine, women and song, and many a time came home in the wee small hours, completely paralyzed. This invariably happened during the absence of the engineer. Next morning he was always very remorseful, and went with contrition to the kitchen, where Rafaela was getting breakfast.

"Are you mad at me?" he used to ask.

She answered him in a maternal kind of way and told him to be good; this always made him laugh.

"None o' that!" he used to say. "I don't like being good. That's one of the many inflictions marriage forces on a man. Don't you have enough 'being good' in this house, with Amadeo?"

Among men, love is often nothing more than the carnal obsession produced in them by the constant and repeated sight of one and the same woman. Every laugh, every motion of the woman moving about them possesses a charm at first hardly noticed. But after a while, under the spell of a phenomenon we may call cumulative, this charm waxes potent; it grows till some time it unexpectedly breaks forth in an enveloping, conquering passion.

Now one morning it happened that Manolo Berlanga was eating breakfast in the dining-room before going to the shop. Rafaela, her back toward him, was scrubbing the floor of the hallway.

"How you do work, my lady!" cried the silversmith, jokingly.

Her answer was a gay-toned laugh; then she went on with her task, sometimes recoiling so that she almost sat on her heels, again stretching her body forward with an energy that lowered the tight-corseted slimness of her waist and set in motion the fullness of her yielding hips. The silversmith had often seen her thus, without having paid any heed; but hardly had he come to realize her sensual appeal when the flame of desire blazed up in him.

"There's a neat one for you!" thought he.

And he kept on looking at her, his vicious imagination dwelling on the perfections of that carnal flower, soft and vibrant. His brown study continued a while. Then suddenly, with the brusqueness of ill-temper, he got up.

"Well, so long!" said he.

He stopped in the stairway to greet a neighbor and light a cigarette. By the time he had reached the street-door he had forgotten all about Rafaela. But, later, his desire once more awoke. At dinner he dissimulated his observations of the young woman's bare arms. Strong and well-molded they were, those arms, and under the cloth of her sleeves rolled up above the elbow, the flesh swelled exuberantly.

"Hm! You haven't combed your hair, to-day," said Berlanga.

She answered with a laugh — one of those frankly voluptuous laughs that women with fine teeth enjoy.

"You're right," said she. "You certainly notice everything. I didn't have time."

"It don't matter," answered the gallant. "Pretty women always look best that way, with their hair flying and their arms bare."

"You mean that, really?"

"I certainly do!"

"Then you've got the temperament and makings of a married man."

"*I* have?"

"Sure!"

"How's that?"

She laughed again, gayly, coquettishly, adding:

"Because you already know that married women generally don't pay much attention to their husbands. That's what hurts marriage — women not caring how they look."

So they went on talking away, and all through their rather spicy conversation, full of meaning, a mutual attraction began to make itself felt. Silently this began sapping their will-power. At last the woman glanced at her clock on the sideboard.

"Eight o'clock," said she. "I wonder what Amadeo's doing, now?"

"Well, that's according," answered Berlanga. "When did he get to Bilbao?"

"This morning."

"Then he's probably been asleep part of the time, and now I guess he's playing dominoes in some café. And we, meantime — we're here — you and I —"

"And you don't feel very well, eh?" she asked.

"I?"

Looking at Rafaela with eloquent steadiness he slowly added:

"I feel a damn sight better than *he* does!"

Then, while he drank his coffee, the silversmith laid out on the table his board-money for that week. He began to count:

"Two and two's four — nine — eleven — thirty-eight pesetas. Rotten week I've had! Say, I've hardly pulled down enough for my drinks."

He got together seven dollars, piled them up — making a little column of silver change — and shoved them over to Rafaela.

"Here you go!" said he.

She blushed, as she answered. You would have thought her offended by the somewhat hostile opposition of debtor and creditor that the money seemed to have set up between them. She asked:

"What's all this you're giving me?"

"Say! What d'you suppose? Don't I pay every week? Well, then, here's my board. Seven days at five pesetas per, that's just thirty-five pesetas, huh? What's the matter with you?"

He made the coins jump and jingle in his agile hand, well-used to dealing cards. Then he added:

"To-day's Saturday. So then, I'll pay you now. That'll leave me three pesetas for extras — tobacco and car-fare. Oh, it's a fine time *I'll* have!"

With a lordly gesture, good-natured, protecting, the woman handed back Berlanga's money.

"Next week you can pay up," said she. "I'm fixed all right. By luck, even if I'm not five dollars to the good, I'm not five to the bad.

The silversmith offered the money again. But this time the offer was weak, and was made only in the half-hearted way that seemed necessary to keep him in good standing. Then he got up from the table, rubbed his hands up and down his legs to smooth the ugly bulge out of the knees of his trousers, pulled down his vest and readjusted the knot of his cravat before the mirror. He exclaimed with a kind of boastful swagger:

"D'you know what I'm thinking?"

"Tell me!"

"Oh, I don't dare."

"Why not?"

"You might get mad at me."

"No, no!"

"Promise you won't?"

"On my word of honor! Come on, now, say anything you like, and *I* won't mind."

"Well — how about — *him!*"

"I know what I'm doing!"

"Yes, but — see here! You don't care a hang for me, anyhow. You don't think very much of *me!*"

"I do, too! I think a lot!"

She looked at him in a gay, provocative manner, stirred to the depths of her by such a strong, overpowering caprice that it almost seemed love.

Expansively the silversmith answered:

"Well, then, since we've got money and we're all alone, why don't we take in a dance, to-night?"

The whole Junoesque body of the young woman — a true Madrid type — trembled with joy. It had been a long time since she had had any such amusement; not since her marriage had she danced. Zureda, something of a stick-in-the-mud and in no wise given to pleasures, had never wanted to take her to any dances, not even to a masquerade. A swarm of joyful visions filled her memory. Ah, those happy Sundays when she had been single! Saturday nights, at the shop, she and the other girls had made dates for the next day. Sometimes they had visited the dance-halls at Bombilla. Other times they had gone to Cuatro Caminos or Ventas del Espiritu Santo. And once there, what laughter and what joy! What strange emotions of half fear, half curiosity they had felt at sensing the desire of whatever man had asked them to dance!

Rafaela straightened up, quick, pliant, transfigured.

"You aren't any more willing to ask me, than I am to go!" said she.

"Well, why not, then?" demanded the silversmith. "Let's go, right now! Let's take a run out to Bombilla, and not leave as long as we've got a cent!"

The young woman fairly jumped for joy, skipped out of the dining-room, tied a silk handkerchief over her head and most fetchingly threw an embroidered shawl over her shoulders. She came back, immediately. Her little high-heeled, pointed, patent-leather boots and her fresh-starched, rustling petticoats echoed her impatience. She went up to Berlanga, took him familiarly by the arm, and said:

"I tell you, though, I'm going to pay half."

The silversmith shook his head in denial. She added, positively:

"That's the only way I'll go. Aren't we both going to have a good time? That's fair, for us both to pay half."

Berlanga accepted this friendly arrangement. As soon as they got into the street they hired a carriage. At Bombilla they had a first-rate supper and danced their heads off, till long past midnight. They went home

afoot, slowly, arm in arm. Rafaela had drunk a bit too much, and often had to stop. Dizzy, she leaned her head on the silversmith's breast. Manolo, himself a bit tipsy and out of control, devoured her with his eyes.

"Say, you're a peach!" he murmured.

"Am I, really?"

"Strike me blind if you're not! Pretty, eh? More than that! You're a wonder — oh, great! The best I ever saw, and I've seen a lot!"

She still had enough wit left to pretend not to hear him, playing she was ill. She stammered:

"Oh, I — I'm so sick!"

Suddenly Berlanga exclaimed:

"If Zureda and I weren't pals — "

Silence. The silversmith added, warming to the subject:

"Rafaela, tell me the truth. Isn't it true that Amadeo stands in our way?"

She peered closely at him, and afterward raised her handkerchief to her eyes. She gave him no other answer. And nothing more happened, just then.

During the monotonous passage of a few more days, Manolo Berlanga gradually realized that Rafaela had big, expressive eyes, small feet with high insteps and a most pleasant walk. He noted that her breasts were firm and full: and he even thought he could detect in her an extremely coquettish desire to appear attractive in his eyes. At the end of it all, the silversmith fully understood his own intentions, which caused him both joy and fear.

"She's got me going," he thought. "She's certainly got me going! Say, I'm crazy about that woman!"

At last, one evening, the ill-restrained passion of the man burst into an overwhelming torrent. On that very night, Zureda was going to come home. Hardly had Manolo Berlanga left the shop when he hurried to his lodgings. He had no more than reached the front room when — no longer able to restrain his evil thoughts — he asked:

"Has Amadeo got here, yet?"

"He'll be here in about fifteen minutes," answered Rafaela. "It's nine o'clock, now. The train's already in. I heard it whistle."

Berlanga entered the dining-room and saw that the young woman was making up his bed. He approached her.

"Want any help?" he asked.

"No, thanks!"

Suddenly, without knowing what he was about, he grabbed her round the waist. She tried to defend herself, turning away, pushing him from her. But, kissing her desperately, he murmured:

"Come now, quick, quick — before he gets here!"

Then, after a brief moment of silent struggle:

"Darling! Don't you see? It had to be this way — !"

The wife of Zureda did not, in fact, put up much of a fight.

A year later, Rafaela gave birth to a boy. Manolo Berlanga stood godfather for it. Both Rafaela and Amadeo agreed on naming it Manolo Amadeo Zureda. The baptism was very fine; they spent more than two thousand *reals* on it.

How pink-and-white, how joyous, how pretty was little Manolín! The engineer, congratulated by everybody, wept with joy.

III

Little Manolo was nearly three years old. He had developed into a very cunning chap, talkative and pleasant. In his small, plump, white face, that looked even whiter by contrast with the dead black of his hair, you could see distinctive characteristics of several persons. His tip-tilted nose and the roguish line of his mouth were his mother's. From his father, no doubt, he had inherited the thoughtful forehead and the heavy set of his jaws. And at the same time you were reminded of his godfather by his lively ways and by a peculiar manner he had of throwing out his feet, when he walked. It seemed almost as if the clever little fellow had set his mind on looking like everybody who had stood near his baptismal font, so that he could win the love of them all.

Zureda worshiped the boy, laughed at all his tricks and graces, and spent hours playing with him on the tiles of the passageway. Little Manolo pulled his mustache and necktie, mauled him and broke the crystal of his watch. Far from getting angry, the engineer loved him all the more for it, as if his strong, rough heart were melting with adoration.

One evening Rafaela went down to the station to say good-by to her husband, who was taking out the 7.05 express. In her arms she carried the boy. Pedro, the fireman, looked out of the cab, and made both the mother and son laugh by pulling all sorts of funny faces.

"Here's the toothache face!" he announced. "And here's the stomach-ache-face!"

Then the bell rang, and they heard the vibrant whistle of the station-master.

"Here, give me the boy!" cried Zureda.

He wanted to kiss him good-by. The little fellow stretched out his tiny arms to his father.

"Take me! Take me, papa!" he entreated with a lisping tongue, his words full of love and charm.

Poor Zureda! The idea of leaving the boy, at that moment, stabbed him to the heart. He could not bear to let him go; he could not! Hardly know-

ing what he was about, he pressed the youngster to his breast with one hand, and with the other eased open the throttle. The train started. Rafaela, terrified, ran along the platform, screaming:

"Give him, give him to me!"

But already, even though Zureda had wanted to give him back, it was too late. Rafaela ran to the end of the platform, and there she had to stop. Pedro laughed and gesticulated from the blackness of the tender, bidding her farewell.

The young woman went back home, in tears. Manolo Berlanga had just got home. He had been drinking and was in the devil's own humor.

"Well, what's up now?" he demanded.

Inconsolable, sobbing, Rafaela told him what had happened.

"Is *that* all?" interrupted the silversmith. "Say, you're crazy! If he's gone, so much the better. Now he'll leave us in peace, a little while. Damn good thing if he *never* came back!"

Then he demanded supper.

"Come, now," he added, "cut out that sniveling! Give me something to eat. I'm in a hurry!"

Rafaela began to light the fire. But all the time she kept on crying and scolding. Her rage and grief dragged out into an interminable monologue:

"My darling — my baby — this is a great note! Think of that man taking him away, like that! The little angel will get his death o' cold. What a fool, what an idiot! And then they talk about the way women act! My precious! What'll I do, thinking about how cold he'll be, to-night? My baby, my heart's blood — my precious little sweetheart ——!"

In her anger she tipped over the bottle of olive-oil. It fell off the stove and smashed on the floor. The rage of the woman became frenzied.

"Damn my soul if I know *what* I'm doing!" she screeched. "Oh, that dirty husband of mine! I hope to God I never see him again. And now, how am I going to cook? I'll have to go down to the store. Say, I wish I'd never been born. We'd all be a lot better off! To Hell with such a ——"

"Say, are you going to keep that roughhouse up all night?" demanded the silversmith. Tired of hearing her noise, he had walked slowly into the kitchen. Now he stood there, black-faced, with his fists doubled up in the pockets of his jacket.

"I'll keep it up as long as I'm a mind to!" she retorted. "What are *you* going to do about it?"

"You shut your jaw," vociferated Berlanga, "or I'll break it for you!"

Then his rage burst out. Joining a bad act to an evil threat, he rained a volley of blows on the head of his mistress. Rafaela stopped crying, and through her gritted teeth spat out a flood of vile epithets.

"You dirty dog!" she cried. "You pimp! All you know how to do is hang around women. Coward! Sissy! The only part of a man you've got is your face!"

He growled:

"Take that, and that, you sow!"

The disgusting scene lasted a long time. Terrified, the woman stopped her noise, and fought. Soon her nose and mouth were streaming blood. In the kitchen resounded a confused tumult of blows and kicks, as the silversmith drove his victim into a corner and beat her up. After the sorry job was done, Berlanga cleared out and never came back till one or two in the morning. Then he went to his room and turned in without making a light, no doubt ashamed of his cowardly deed.

For a while he tried to excuse himself. After all, thought he, the whole blame wasn't his. Rafaela's tirade and the wine he himself had drunk, had been more than half at fault. Men, he reflected, certainly do become brutes when they drink.

The young woman was in her bedroom. From time to time, Berlanga heard her sigh deeply. Her sighs were long and tremulous, like those of a child still troubled in its dreams after having cried itself to sleep.

The silversmith exclaimed:

"Oh, Rafaela!"

He had to call her twice more. At last, in a kind of groan, the young woman answered:

"Well, what do you want?"

Slyly and proudly the silversmith grinned to himself. That question of hers practically amounted to forgiveness. The sweet moment of reconciliation was close at hand.

"Come here!" he ordered.

Another pause followed, during which the will of the man and of the woman seemed to meet and struggle, with strange magnetism, in the stillness of the dark house.

"Come, girl!" repeated the smith, softening his voice.

Then he added, after a moment:

"Well, don't you want to come?"

Another minute passed; for all women, even the simplest and most ignorant, know to perfection the magic secret of making a man wait for them. But after a little while, Berlanga heard Rafaela's bare feet paddling along the hall. The young woman reached the bedroom of the silversmith, and in the shadows her exploring hands met the hands that Manolo was stretching out to greet her.

"What do you want, anyhow?" she demanded, humble yet resentful.

"Come to bed!"

She obeyed. Many kisses sounded, given her by the smith. After a while the man's voice asked in an endearing yet overmastering way:

"Now, then, are you going to be good?"

Amadeo Zureda came back a couple of days later, eminently well

pleased. His boy had played the part of a regular little man during the whole run. He had never cried, but had eaten whatever they had given him and had slept like a top, on the coal. When Zureda kissed his wife, he noticed that she had a black-and-blue spot on her forehead.

"That looks like somebody had hit you," said he. "Have you been fighting with any one?"

She hesitated, then answered:

"No, no. Why, who'd I be fighting with? Much less coming to blows? The night you left, the oil-bottle fell off the sideboard, and when I went to pick it up I got this bump."

"How about that big scratch, there?"

"Which one? Oh, you mean on my lip? I did that with a pin."

"That's too bad! Take care of yourself, little lady!"

Manolo Berlanga was there and heard all this. He had to bite his mustache to hide a wicked laugh; but the engineer saw nothing at all. The poor man suspected nothing. He remained quite blind. Even if he had not loved Rafaela, his adoration of the boy would have been enough to fill his eyes with dust.

IV

Truth, however, is mighty and will prevail. After a while Zureda began to observe that something odd was going on about him. Slowly and without knowing why, he found a sort of distance separating him from his companions, who treated him and looked at him in a new way. You would almost have said they were trying to extort from his eyes the confession of some risqué secret he was doubtless keeping well covered up and hidden; a secret everybody knew. A complex sentiment of curiosity and silence isolated him from his friends and seemed to befog him with inexplicable ridicule. After a while he grew much puzzled by this phenomenon.

"I wonder if I've changed?" thought he. "Maybe I'm sick, without knowing it. Or can it be that I'm mighty ugly, and nobody dares to tell me so?"

Not far from the station, and near Manzanares Street, there was an eating-house where the porters, engineers and firemen were wont to foregather. This establishment belonged to Señor Tomás, who in his youth had been a toreador. The aplomb and force, as well as the stout-heartedness of that brave, gay profession still remained his. Señor Tomás talked very little, and for those who knew him well his words had the authority of print. He was a tall old fellow, with powerful hands and shoulders; he wore velveteen trousers and little Andalusian jackets of black stuff; and over the sash with which he masked his growing girth he strapped a wide leather belt with a silver buckle.

One evening Señor Tomás was enjoying the air at the door of his eating-

house when Zureda passed by. The tavern-keeper beckoned the engineer; and when Zureda had come near, looked fixedly into his eyes and said:

"You and I have got to have a few words."

Zureda remained dumb. The secret, chill vibration of an evil presentiment had passed like a cold wind through his heart. Presently recovering speech, he answered:

"Any time you say so."

They reëntered the tavern, which just then was almost without patrons. A high wooden shelf, painted red and covered with bottles, ran about the room. On the wall was hung the stuffed head of the bull that had given Señor Tomás the tremendous gash which had torn his leg open and had obliged him to lay aside forever the garb of a toreador. At the rear, the bartender had fallen asleep behind the polished bar, on which a little fountain of water was playing its perpetual music.

The two men sat down at a big table, and the tavern-keeper clapped his hands together.

"Hey you, there!" he cried.

The bartender woke up and came to him.

"What'll you have?" asked he.

"Bring some olives and two cups of wine."

A long pause followed. Señor Tomás with voracious pulls at his smoldering cigar set its tip glowing. A kind of gloomy preoccupation hardened his close-shaven face — a face that showed itself bronzed and fleshy beneath the white hair grandly combed and curled upon his forehead.

Presently he began:

"I hate to see two men fight, because if they're spirited it's bound to be serious. But still I can't bear to see a good man and a hard-working man be made a laughing-stock for everybody. Get me?"

Amadeo Zureda first grew pale and then red. Yes, he knew something was up. The old man had called him to tell him some terrible mystery. He felt that the strange feeling of vacancy all about him, which he had been sensing for some time, was at last going to be explained. He trembled. Something black, something vast was closing over his head; it might be one of those fearful tragedies that sometimes cut a human life in twain.

"I don't know how to talk, and I don't like to talk," went on the tavern-keeper. "That's why I don't beat round the bush, but I call a spade a spade. Yes, sir, I call things by their right names. Because in this world, Amadeo — you mark my words — everything's got a name."

"That's so, Señor Tomás."

"All right. And I'm one of those fellows that go right after the truth the way I used to go after the bull — go the quickest way, which is the best way, because it's the shortest."

"That's right, too."

"Well, then. I like you first-rate, Amadeo. I know you're a worker,

and I know you're one of those honest men that wouldn't stand for any crooked work to turn a dollar. And I know, too, you're a man that knows how to use his fists and how to run up the battle-flag of the soul, when you have to. I'm sure of all this. And by the same token, I won't let anybody make fun of you.

"Thanks, Señor Tomás."

"All right! Now, then, in my house, right here, people are saying your wife is thick with Manolo Berlanga!"

The eyes of the tavern-keeper and the engineer met. They remained fixed, so, a moment. Then the eyes of Zureda opened wide, seemed starting from their sockets. Suddenly he jumped up, and his square fingernails fairly sank into the wood of the table. His white lips, slavering, stammered in a fit of rage:

"That's a lie, a damned lie, Señor Tomás! I'll cut your heart out for that! Yes, if the Virgin herself came down and told me that, I'd cut her heart out, too! God, what a lie!"

The tavern-keeper remained entirely self-possessed. Without even a change of expression he answered:

"All right! Find out what's true or false in this business. For you know there's no difference between the truth and a lie that everybody's telling. And if you decide there's nothing to this except what I say, come and tell me, for I'm right here and everywhere to back up my words!"

The tavern-keeper grew silent, and Amadeo Zureda remained motionless, struck senseless, gaping.

After a few minutes his ideas began to calm down again, and as they grew quiet they coördinated themselves; then the engineer felt an unwholesome and resistless curiosity to know everything, to torture himself digging out details.

"You mean to tell me," asked he, "that they've talked about that, right here?"

"Right on the spot, sir!"

"When?"

"More than once, and more than twenty times; and they say worse than that, too. They say Berlanga beats your wife, and you're wise to everything, and have been from the beginning. And they say you stand for it, to have a good thing, because this Berlanga fellow helps you pay the rent."

A couple of porters came in, and interrupted the conversation. Señor Tomás ended up with:

"Well now, you know all about it!"

When Zureda left the tavern, his first impulse was to go home and put it up to Rafaela. Either with soft words or with a stick he might get something about Berlanga out of her. But presently he changed his mind. Affairs of this kind can't be hurried much. It is better to go slow, to wait,

to get information bit by bit and all by one's self. When he reached the station it was six o'clock. He met Pedro on the platform.

"Which engine have we got to-day?" asked Amadeo.

"Nigger," answered the fireman.

"The devil! It just had to be her, eh?"

That run was terrible indeed, packed full of inward struggles and of battles with the rebellious locomotive — an infernal run that Zureda remembered all his life.

With due regard for the prudent scheme that he had mapped out, the engineer set himself to observing the way his wife and Manolo had of talking to each other. After greatly straining his attention, he could find nothing in the cordial frankness of their relations that seemed to pass the limits of good friendship. From the time when Berlanga had stood god-father for little Manolo, Amadeo had begged them to use "thee" and "thou" to each other, and this they had done. But this familiarity seemed quite brother-and-sisterly; it seemed justified by the three years they had been living in the same house, and could hardly be suspected of hiding any guilty secret.

None the less, the jealousy of Zureda kept on growing, rooting itself in every pretext, and using even the most minor thing to inflame and color with vampire suspicion every thought of the engineer. The notion kept growing in Zureda; it became an obsession which made him see the dreaded vision constantly, just as through another obsession, Berlanga's desire for Rafaela had been born.

At last Amadeo became convinced that his skill as a spy was very poor. He lacked that astuteness, those powers of deception and that divining instinct which, in a kind of second sight, makes some men get swiftly and directly at the bottom of things. In view of his blunt character, unfitted for any kind of diplomatic craft, he thought it better to confront the matter face to face.

As soon as he had come by this resolution, his uneasiness grew calm. A sedative feeling of peace took possession of his heart. The engineer passed that day quietly reading, waiting for night to come. Rafaela was sewing in the dining-room, with little Manolo asleep on her lap. Half an hour before supper, Zureda tiptoed to their bedroom and took from the little night-table his heavy-bladed, horn-handled hunting knife — the knife he always carried on his runs. After that he put on a flat cap tied a muffler round his neck — for the evening was cold — and started to leave the house. In the emptiness of the hallway his heavy, determined footfalls, echoing, seemed to waken something deadly.

A bit surprised, Rafaela asked:

"Aren't you going to eat supper here?"

"Yes," he answered, "but I'm just going out to stretch my legs a little. I'll be right back."

He kissed his wife and the boy, mentally taking a long farewell of them, and went out.

In Señor Tomás' tavern he found Manolo Berlangá playing *tute* with several friends. The silversmith was drunk, and his arrogant, defiant voice dominated the others. Slowly, with a careless and taciturn air, the engineer approached the group.

"Good evening, all," said he.

At first, no one answered him, for everybody's attention was fixed on the wayward come-and-go of the cards. When the game was done, one of the players exclaimed:

"Hello there, Amadeo! I didn't see *you!* But I saw your wife and kid yesterday. Some boy! And that's a pretty woman you've got, too. I don't say that just because you're here. It's true. Anybody can see you make all kinds of money, and spend it all on your wife!"

"Yes, and if he didn't," put in Berlanga, offering Zureda a glass of wine, "there'd be plenty more who would. How about that, Amadeo?"

Zureda remained impassive. He gulped the wine at one swallow. Then he ordered a bottle for all hands.

"Come on, now, I'll go you a game of *mus*," he challenged Berlanga. "Antolín, here, will be my partner."

The silversmith accepted.

"Go to it!" said he.

The players all sat down around the table, and the game began.

"I'll open up."

"Pass."

"I'll stay in."

"I'm out."

"I'll stick."

"I'll raise that!"

"I renig!"

Now and then the players stopped for a drink, and a few daring bets brought out bursts of laughter.

"Whose deal, now?"

"Mine!"

All at once Amadeo, who was looking for some excuse to get into a row with the silversmith, cheated openly and took the pot. Manolo saw him cheat. Incensed, he threw his cards on the floor.

"Here now, that don't go!" he cried. "I don't care if we *are* friends, you can't get away with *that!*"

All the other players, angered, backed up the silversmith.

"No, sir! No, that don't go, here!" They echoed.

Very quietly the engineer demanded:

"Well, what have *I* done?"

"You threw away this card, the five o' clubs," replied Berlanga, "and slipped yourself a king, that you needed! That's all. You're cheating!"

The engineer answered the furious insult of the silversmith with a blow in the face. They tackled each other like a couple of cats. Chairs and table rolled on the floor. Señor Tomás came running, and he and the other players succeeded in separating them. A crowd, attracted by the noise of the fight gathered like magic. The tumult of these curiosity-seekers helped Amadeo hide his words as he and Manolo left the tavern. He said in his companion's ear:

"I'll be waiting for you in front of San Antonio de la Florida."

"Suits *me!*"

And, a few minutes later, they met at the indicated spot.

"Let's go where nobody can see us," said the engineer.

"I'll go anywhere you like," answered Berlanga. "Lead the way!"

They crossed the river and came to the little fields out at Fuente de la Teja. The shadows were thicker there, under the trees. At a likely-looking spot the two men stopped. Zureda peered all about him. His eyes, used to penetrating dark horizons, seemed to grow calm. The two men were all alone.

"I've brought you here," said the engineer, "either to kill you or have you kill me."

Berlanga was pretty tipsy. Brave in his cups, he peered closely at the other. He kept his hands in the pockets of his coat. His brow was frowning; his chin was thrust out and aggressive. He had already guessed what Zureda was going to ask him, and the idea of being catechized revolted his pride.

"It looks to me," he swaggered, "like you and I were going to have a few words."

And immediately he added, as if he could read the thought of Zureda:

"They've been telling you I'm thick with Rafaela, and you're after the facts."

"Yes, that's it," answered the engineer.

"Well, they aren't lying. What's the use of lying? It's so, all right."

Then he held his peace and looked at Zureda. The engineer's eyes were usually big and black, but now by some strange miracle of rage they had become small and red. Neither man made any further speech. There was no need of any. All the words they might have hurled at each other would have been futile. Zureda recoiled a few steps and unsheathed his knife. The silversmith snicked open a big pocket blade.

They fell violently on each other. It was a prehistoric battle, body to body, savage, silent. Manolo was killed. He fell on his back, his face white, his mouth twisted in an unforgettable grimace of pain and hate.

The engineer ran away and was already crossing the bridge, when a woman who had been following him at a short distance began to cry:

"Catch him! Catch him! He's just killed a man!"

A couple of policemen, at the door of an inn, stopped Zureda. They arrested him and handcuffed him. He made no resistance.

Rafaela went to see him in jail. The engineer, because of his love for her and for the boy, received her with affection. He assured her he had got into a fight with Manolo over a card-game. Fourteen or fifteen months later he maintained the same story, in court. He claimed he and Manolo had been playing *mus*, and that by way of a joke on his friends he had thrown away one of the cards in his hand and slipped himself another. Then he said Berlanga had denounced him as a cheat; they had quarreled, and had challenged each other.

Thus spoke Amadeo Zureda, in his chivalric attempt not to throw even the lightest shadow on the good name of the woman he adored. Who could have acted more nobly that he? The state's attorney arraigned him in crushing terms, implacably.

And the judge gave him twenty years at hard labor.

V

Scourged by poverty, which was not long in arriving, Rafaela had to move away to a little village of Castile, where she had relatives. These were poor farming people, making a hard fight for existence. By way of excuse for her coming to them, the young woman made up a story. She said that Amadeo had got into some kind of trouble with his employers, had been discharged and had gone to Argentina, for there he had heard engineers got excellent pay. After that, she had decided to leave Madrid, where food and lodging were very dear. She ended her tale judiciously:

"As soon as I hear from Amadeo that he's got a good job, I'm going out there to him."

Her relatives believed her, took pity on her and found her work. Every day, with the first light of morning, Rafaela went down to the river to wash. The river was about half a kilometer from the little village. By washing and ironing, at times, or again by picking up wood in the country and selling it, Rafaela managed, with hard, persistent toil, to make four or five *reals* a day.

Two years passed. By this time the neighbors were beginning to find out from the mail-carrier that the addresses on all the letters coming to Rafaela were written by the same hand and all bore the postmark of Ceuta. This news got about and set things buzzing. The young woman put an end to folks' gossip by very sensibly confessing the truth that Amadeo was in prison there. She said a gambling-scrape had got him into trouble. In her confession she adopted a resigned and humble manner, like a model wife who, in spite of having suffered much, nevertheless forgives the man she loves, and pardons all the wrongs done her. People called her unfortunate. They tattled a while, and then took pity on her and accepted her.

Worn out by time and hardships, her former beauty — piquant in a way, though a bit common — soon faded away. The sun tanned her skin; the

dust of the country roads got into her hair, once so clean and wavy; hard work toughened and deformed her hands, which in better days she had well cared for. She gave over wearing corsets, and this hastened the ruin of her body. Slowly her breasts grew flaccid, her abdomen bulged, her whole figure took on heavy fullnesses. And her clothes, too, bit by bit got torn and spoiled. Her petticoats and stockings, her neat patent-leather boots bought in happier days, disappeared sadly, one after the other. Rafaela, who had lost all desire to be coquettish or to please men, let herself slide into poverty; and, in the end, she sank so low as to slop round the village streets, barefooted.

This disintegration of her will coincided with a serious loss and confusion of her memory. The poor woman began to forget everything; and the few recollections she still retained grew so disjointed, so vague that they no longer were able to arouse any stimulating emotion in her. She had never really loved Berlanga. What she had felt for him had been only a kind of caprice, an unreasoning will o' the wisp passion; but this amorous dalliance had soon faded out. And the only reason she had kept on with the silversmith had been because she had been afraid of him and had been weak-willed. The smith, moreover, had become jealous and had often beaten her. Thus his tragic death, far from causing her any grief, had come to her as an agreeable surprise. It had quieted her, rested her, freed her.

If the punishment of Zureda and his confinement in prison walls wounded her deeply, it was not on account of her broken love for the engineer. No, rather was it because this disaster had disturbed the easy, comfortable rhythm of her life and because the exile of her husband had meant misery for her, poverty, the irremediable overthrow of her whole future.

After the crisis which had wrecked her home, Rafaela — hardly noticing it, herself — had grown stupid, old and of defective memory. The many violent and dramatic shocks she had borne in so short a time had annihilated her mediocre spirit. She suffered no remorse and had no very clear idea as to whether her past conduct had been good or bad. It was as if her conscience had sunk away into unthinking stupor. The only thing that still remained in her, unchanged, was the maternal instinct of living and working for little Manolo, so that he, too, might live.

True enough, on certain days the wretched woman drank deeply the cup of gall, as certain memories returned. Now and then there came to her a poisoned vision of black recollections that rose about her, stifling her. This usually happened down at the river-bank, while she was washing, at times of mental abstraction caused by her monotonous and purely mechanical toil. Then her eyes would fill with tears, which slowly rolled down her cheeks and fell upon her hands, now reddened by hard labor and the cold caress of the water. The other washwomen, all about her, observed her grief, and fell to whispering:

"See how she's crying?"

"Poor thing!"

"Poor? Well — it was her own doing. Fate is just. It gives everybody what they deserve. Why didn't she look out who she was marrying?"

From time to time away down at the end of the valley, shut in behind an undulating line of blue hills, a train passed by. Its strident whistle, enlarged and flung about hither and yon by echoes, broke the silence of the plain. Some few of the younger washwomen usually sat up on their heels, then, and followed with their eyes the precipitate on-rushing of the train. You could behold a dreaming sadness in their eyes, a vision of far-off, unseen cities. But Rafaela never raised her head to look at the train. The shrieking whistle tore at her ears with the vibration of a familiar voice. She kept on washing, while her tear-wet eyes seemed to be peering at the mysteries of forgetfulness in the passing water.

Despite the great physical and moral decline of the poor woman, she did not fail to waken thoughts and hopes in a certain man. To her aspired a fellow named Benjamin, by trade a shoemaker. He was already turning fifty years, was a widower and had two sons in the army.

This Benjamin's affairs went along only so-so, because not all the people of the village could afford to wear shoes, and those who could afford them did not feel any great need of wearing fine or new ones. Rafaela washed and mended his clothes, and ironed a shirt for him, every saint's-day. He paid her little, but regularly, for these services; and gradually friendship grew up between them. This mutual liking, which was at first impersonal and calm, finally grew in the shoemaker's heart till it became the fire of love.

"If you were only willing," Señor Benjamin often said to Rafaela, "we could come to an understanding. You're all alone. So am I. Well, why not live together?"

She smiled, with that disillusion which comes to a soul that life has bit by bit ravaged of all its dreams.

"You're crazy to talk that way, Benjamin," she would answer.

"Why?"

"Oh, because."

"Come now, explain that! Why am I crazy?"

Rafaela did not want to annoy the man, because she would thus lose a customer, and so she gave him an evasive answer:

"Why, I'm already old."

"Not for me!"

"I'm ugly!"

"That's a matter of taste. You suit *me* to a T."

"Thanks. But, what would people say? And suppose we had any children, Benjamin! What would they think of us?"

"Oh, there's a thousand ways to cover it all up. You just take a shine to me, and I'll fix everything else."

Rafaela promised to think it over; and every night when she came home from work, Benjamin jokingly asked her, from his door:

"Well, neighbor, how about it?"

"I'm still thinking it over," she answered, with a laugh.

"It seems to be pretty hard for you to decide."

"It surely is!"

"Yes, but are you going to get it settled?"

"How do *I* know, Benjamin? Sometimes I think one thing, and sometimes another. Time will tell!"

But the soul of Rafaela lay dead. Nothing could revive her illusions. The shoemaker, after many efforts, had to give her up. And always after that, when he saw her pass along, he would heave a sigh in an absurd, romantic manner.

On the first of every month, Rafaela always wrote a four-page letter to Zureda, containing all the petty details of her quiet, humdrum life. It was by means of these letters, written on commercial cap, that the prisoner learned the rapid physical growth of little Manolo. By the time the boy had reached twelve years he had become rebellious, quarrelsome and idle. He was still in the pot-hook class, at school. Stone-throwing was one of his favorite habits. One day he injured another boy of his age so severely that the constable gathered him in, and nothing but the fatherly intervention of the priest saved him from a night in the lock-up.

Rafaela always ended up the paragraphs thus, in which she described the fierce wildness of the boy:

"I tell you plainly, I can't manage him."

This seemed a confession of weariness, that outlined both a threat and a prophecy.

The prisoner wrote her, in one of his letters:

"The last jail pardon, that you may have read about in the papers, let out many of my companions. I had no such luck. But, anyhow, they cut five years off my time. So there are only six years more between us."

Regularly the letters came and went between Rafaela and the prisoner at Ceuta. Two years more drew to their close.

But evil fortune had not yet grown weary of stamping its heel on Amadeo Zureda's honest shoulders.

"Please forgive me, dear Rafaela," the prisoner wrote again, after a while, "the new sorrow I must cause you. But by the life of our son I swear I could not avoid the misfortune which most expectedly is going to prolong our separation, for I don't know how long.

"As you may guess, there are few saints among the rough crowd here, that are scraped up from all the prisons in Spain. Though I have to live among them, I don't consider them my equals. For that reason I try to keep away from them, and have nothing to do with their rough mirth or noisy quarrels. Well, it happened that the end of last week a smart-

Aleck of a fellow came in, an Andalusian. He had been given twelve years for killing one man and badly injuring another. As soon as this fellow saw me, he took me for a boob he could make sport of, and lost no chance of poking fun at me. I kept quiet, and — so as not to get into any mix-up with him — turned my back on him.

"Yesterday, at dinner, he tried to pick a quarrel. Some of the other prisoners laughed and set him on to me.

"'Look here, Amadeo,' said he. 'What are you in for?'

"I answered, looking him square in the eyes:

"'For having killed a man.'

"'And what did you kill him for?' he insisted.

"I said nothing, and then he added something very coarse and ugly that I won't repeat. It's enough for you to know your name was mixed up in it. That's why your name was the last word his mouth ever uttered. I drew my knife — you know that in spite of all the care they take, and all their searches, we all go armed — and cried:

"'Look out for yourself, now, because I'm going to kill you!'

"Then we fought, and it was a good fight, too, because he was a brave man. But his courage was of no use to him. He died on the spot.

"Forgive me, dearest Rafaela of my soul, and make our boy forgive me, too. This makes my situation much worse, because now I shall have another trial and I don't know what sentence I'll get. I realize it was very bad of me to kill this man, but if I hadn't done it he would have killed me, which would have been much worse for all of us."

Several months after, Zureda wrote again:

"I have been having my trial. Luckily all the witnesses testified in my behalf, and this, added to the good opinion the prison authorities have of me, has greatly improved my position. The indictment was terrible, but I'm not worrying much about that. To-morrow I shall know my sentence."

All the letters of Amadeo Zureda were like this, peaceful and noble, seemingly dictated by the most resigned stoicism. He never let anything find its way into them which might remind Rafaela of her fault. In these pages, filled with a strong, even writing, there was neither reproach, dejection, nor despairing impatience. They seemed to be the admirable reflection of an iron will which had been taught by misfortune — the most excellent mother of all knowledge — to understand the dour secret of hoping and of waiting.

VI

The very same day when Amadeo Zureda got out of jail, he received from Rafaela a letter which began thus:

"Little Manolo was twenty years old, yesterday."

The one-time engineer left the boat from Africa at Valencia, passed the night at an inn not far from the railroad station, and early next morning took the train which was to carry him to Ecks. After so many years of imprisonment, the old convict felt that nervous restlessness, that lack of self-confidence, that cruel fear of destiny which men ill-adapted to their environment are accustomed to feel every time life presents itself to them under a new aspect. Defeat at last makes men cowardly and pessimistic. They recall everything they have suffered and the uselessness of all their struggles, and they think: "This, that I am now beginning, will turn out badly for me too, like all the rest."

Amadeo Zureda had altered greatly. His white mustache formed a sad contrast with his wrinkled face, tanned by the African sun. The expression of an infinite pain seemed to deepen the peaceful gaze of his black eyes. The vertical wrinkle in his brow had deepened until it seemed a scar. His body, once strong and erect, had grown thin; and as he walked he bent somewhat forward.

The rattling uproar of the train and the swift succession of panoramas now unrolling before his eyes recalled to the memory of Zureda the joys of those other and better times when he had been an engineer — joys now largely blotted out by the distance of long-gone years. He remembered Pedro, the Andalusian fireman, and those two engines, "Sweetie" and "Nigger," on which he had worked so long. An inner voice seemed asking him: "What can have become of all this?"

He also thought about his house. He mentally built up again its façade, beheld its balconies and evoked the appearance of each room. His memory, clouded by the grim and brutalizing life of the prison, had never dipped so profoundly into the past, nor had it ever brushed away the dust from his old memories and so clearly reconstructed them. He thought about his son, about Rafaela and Manolo Berlanga, seeming to behold their faces and even their clothing just as they had been long ago; and he felt surprised that revocation of the silversmith's face should produce no pain in him. At that moment and in spite of the irreparable injury which had been done him, he felt no hatred of Berlanga. All the rancor which until then had possessed him seemed to sink down peacefully into an unknown and ineffable emotion of pity and forgetfulness. The poor convict once more examined his conscience, and felt astonished that he could no longer find any poison there. May it not be, after all, that liberty reforms a man?

At Játiva a man got into the car, a man already old, whose face seemed to the former engineer to bear some traces of a friendly appearance. The new-comer also, on his side, looked at Zureda as if he remembered him. Thus both of them little by little silently drew together. In the end they studied each other with warm interest, as if sure of having sometime known each other before. Amadeo was the first to speak.

"It seems to me," said he, "that we have already seen each other somewhere, years ago."

"That was just what I was thinking, myself," answered the other.

"The fact is," went on the engineer, "I'm sure we must have talked to each other, many times."

"Yes, yes!"

"We must have been friends, sometime."

"Probably."

And they continued looking at each other, enwrapped by the same thought. Zureda asked:

"Have you ever lived in Madrid?"

"Yes, ten or twelve years."

"Where?"

"Near the Estación del Norte, where I was an employee."

"Say no more!" exclaimed Zureda. "I worked for the same company, myself. I was an engineer."

"On what line?"

"Madrid to Bilbao."

Slowly and silently memories began to rise and group themselves together in the enormous, black forgetfulness of those twenty years. Amadeo Zureda took out his tobacco-box and offered tobacco to his companion. Whatever seemed to have been lacking to awaken memory, in the other's appearance or in his voice, was now instantly supplied as the engineer saw him take the fine-cut, roll a cigarette, light it and afterward thrust it into the left corner of his mouth. The memories of the old convict were flooded with light.

"Enough of this!" cried he. "You are Don Adolfo Moreno!"

"That's right, I'm the man!"

"You were a conductor on the Asturias line when I worked on the one running to Bilbao. Don't you remember me? Amadeo Zureda?"

"Yes, indeed!"

The two men embraced each other.

"Why, I used to say 'thee' and 'thou' to you!" cried Don Adolfo.

"Yes, yes, I remember that, too. I remember everything, now. We were good friends once, eh? Well, time seems to have made some pretty big changes in both of us."

When the joy of the first moments of meeting had been somewhat allayed, the former conductor and the old engineer grew sad as they recalled the many bitter experiences life had dealt them.

"I've already heard of your misfortune," said Don Adolfo, "and I was mighty sorry to hear about it. Sometimes a youthful moment of madness, that lasts only a minute, will cost a man his whole future. Why did you do it?"

Stolidly Zuredo answered:

"Oh, it was a quarrel over cards."

"Yes, that's so; they told me about it."

Amadeo breathed easy. The conductor knew nothing; and it seemed probable that many others should be as ignorant as he about what had driven him to kill Manolo. Don Adolfo asked:

"Where have you been?"

"At Ceuta."

"A long time?"

"Twenty years and some months."

"The deuce! You've just come from down there?"

"Yes, sir."

"It's evident to me," continued Don Adolfo, "you've suffered a great deal more than I have; but you mustn't think I have been lucky, either. Life is a wild animal that drags down every one who tries to grapple with it, and yet people keep right on struggling. I'm a widower. My poor wife has been dust for nearly fifteen years. The eldest of my three daughters got married, and both the others died. Now I'm on a pension and live at Ecks with a sister-in-law, the widow of my brother Juan. I don't think you remember him."

Little by little, and with many beatings about the bush, because confidence is a timid quality which soon takes flight from those scourged by misfortune, the ex-convict told his plans. He hoped to establish himself at Ecks, with his wife. He had brought about two thousand pesetas from prison, with which he hoped to buy a little house and a bit of good land.

"I don't know beans about farming," he added, "but that's like everything else. You learn by doing. Moreover, my son, who has grown up in the town, will help me a great deal."

Don Adolfo wrinkled his brow with a grave and reflective expression, like a man who is remembering something.

"From what you say," he exclaimed, "I think I know who your wife is."

The old engineer felt shame. The bleeding image of his misfortune was hard to wipe from his memory. The mention of his wife had freshened it. He answered:

"You probably do know her. The village must be very small."

"Very small, indeed. What's your wife's name?"

"Rafaela."

"Yes, yes," answered Don Adolfo. "Rafaela's the woman. I know her well. As for Manolo, your son, I know him too."

Amadeo Zureda trembled. He felt afraid, and cold. For a few moments he remained silent, without knowing what to say. Don Adolfo continued with rough frankness:

"Your Manolo is a pretty tough nut, and he gives his poor mother a mighty hard time. She's a saint, that woman. I think he even beats her. Well, I won't tell you any more."

Pale and trembling, putting down a great desire to weep which had just come over him, Amadeo asked:

"Is it possible? Can he be as bad as that?"

"I tell you he's a dandy!" repeated Don Adolfo. "If he died, the devil would think a good while before taking him. He's a drunkard and a gambler, always chasing women and fighting. He's the limit!" After a moment he added: "Really, he don't seem like a son of yours, at all."

Amadeo Zureda made no answer. Looking out of the car window, he tried to distract himself with the landscape. The old conductor's words had crushed him. He had been ignorant of all this, for Rafaela in her letters had said nothing about it. He was astonished at realizing how evil destiny was attacking him, denying him that rest which every hard-working man, no matter how poor, is at last entitled to.

Retracing the hateful pathway of his memories, he reached the source of all his misfortunes. Twenty years before, when Señor Tomás had told him of the relations between Rafaela and Manolo, he too had declared: "They say he beats her."

What connection might there be between these statements, which seemed to weave a nexus of hate between the son and the dead lover? Once more the words of the old conductor sounded in his ears, and prophetically took hold upon his soul:

"Manolo does not appear to be your son."

Without having read Darwin, Amadeo Zureda instinctively sought explanation and consolation in the laws of heredity, for the pain now consuming him. Never had he, even when a young fellow, been given to drink or cards. He had not been fond of the women, nor had he been a meddler and bully. And how had such degradations been able to engraft themselves into the blood of his son?

Don Adolfo and Zureda got out at the station of Ecks. Afternoon was drawing to its close. On the platform there were only six or seven persons. The former conductor waved his hand to a woman and to a young man, drawing near. He cried:

"There are your folks!"

This time seeing Rafaela, Amadeo did not hesitate. It was she indeed, despite her protuberant abdomen, her sad fat face, and her white hair. It was she!

"Rafaela!" cried he. He would have known her among a thousand other women. They fell into each other's arms, weeping with that enormous joy and pain felt by all who part in youth and meet again in old age, with the whole of life behind them. After the greeting with his wife was at an end, the engineer embraced Manolo.

"What a fine fellow you are!" he stammered, when the beating of his heart, growing a little more calm, let him speak.

Don Adolfo said good-by.

"I'm in a hurry. We'll see each other to-morrow!" He saluted, and walked away.

Amadeo Zureda, with Rafaela at his right and Manolo at his left quitted the station.

"Is the town very far away?" asked he.

"Hardly two kilometers," she answered.

"All right then, let's walk."

Slowly they made their way down the road that stretched, winding, between two vast reaches of brown, plowed land. Far in the distance, lighted by the dying sun, the little hamlet was visible; that miserable collection of huts about which Zureda had thought so many times, dreaming that there he should find the sweet refuge of peaceful forgetfulness and of redemption.

VII

After Amadeo came to Ecks, Rafaela went no longer to the river. The former engineer was unwilling that his wife should toil. They had enough for all to live on for a while, with what he had made in prison. They spoke not of the past. You might almost have thought they had forgotten it. Why remember? Zureda had forgiven everything. Rafaela, moreover, was no longer the same. The gay happiness of her eyes had gone dead; the waving blackness of her hair and the girlish quickness of her body had vanished. There was a melancholy abandonment, heavy with remorse, in her sad and flabby face, in the humility of her look, in the slow, round fatness of her whole body.

The ex-convict followed the advice of Don Adolfo and gave up all idea of devoting himself to farming. In the best street of the village, near the church, he set up a general repair-shop where he took in both wood and iron work. There he shod a mule, mended a cart or put a new coulter to a plow, with equal facility.

He had not been established long when his modest little business began to pick up and be a real money-maker. Very soon his customers increased. The disquieting story of his imprisonment seemed forgotten. Everybody liked him, for he was good, affable and pleasant, in a melancholy way. He paid his little debts promptly, and worked hard.

Zureda felt life once more grow calm. Slowly his future, which till then had looked stormy, commenced to appear a land of hospitality, comfortable and good. The threat of to-morrow, which makes so many men uneasy, had ceased to be a problem for him. His future was already founded, laid out, foreseen. The fifteen or twenty years that still might remain to him, he hoped to pass in the loving accumulation of a little fortune to leave his Rafaela.

He got up with the sun and worked industriously all day, driven by

this ambition. In the evening he took a dog that Don Adolfo had given him, and went wandering in the outskirts of the village. One of his favorite walks was out to the cemetery. He often pushed open the old gate, which never was quite closed, and in the burial-ground sat himself down upon a broken mill-stone which happened to be there. Seated thus, he liked to smoke a cigarette.

Many crosses were blackening with age, in the tall grass that covered the earth. The old man often called up memories of the time when he had been an engineer. He remembered the prison, too, and his tired will seemed to tremble. Peacefully he looked about him. Here, sometime, would be his bed. What rest, what silence! And he breathed deep, enthralled by the rare and calming joy of willingness to die. Here inside the old wall of mud bricks, reddened by the setting sun — here in this garden of forgetfulness — how well one ought to sleep!

Only one trouble disturbed and embittered the peaceful decline of Amadeo Zureda. This trouble was his son, Manolo. Through an excess of fatherly love, doubtless mistaken, he had the year before got Manolo exempted from military service. The boy's wild, vicious character was fanatically rebellious against all discipline. In vain Zureda sought to teach him a trade. Threats and entreaties, as well as all kinds of wise advice, were shattered against the invincibly gypsy-like will of the young fellow.

"If you don't want to support me," Manolo often used to say, "let me go. Kick me out. I'll get by, on my own hook."

Often and often Manolo vanished from the little town. He stayed away for days at a time, engaged in mysterious adventures. People coming in from neighboring villages reported him as given over to gaming. One night he showed up with a serious wound in the groin, a deep knife-stab.

"Who did that to you?" demanded Zureda.

The youth answered:

"Nobody's business. *I* know who it is. Sometime or other he'll get his, all right!"

To save himself from police investigation, Zureda said nothing about it. For some weeks, Manolo kept quiet. But early one morning a couple of rural guards found the body of a man on the river-bank. His body was covered with stabs. All investigations to find the murderer were fruitless. The crime remained unavenged. Only Amadeo — who just a bit after the discovery of the body had discovered Manolo washing a blood-stained handkerchief in a water-jar — was certain that his son had done this murder.

Once more the sinister words of Don Adolfo recurred to his mind, bruising him, maddening him, seeming to bore into his very brain:

"He does not seem to be your son, at all!"

Amadeo pondered this, and decided it was true. The boy did not seem his. Manolo's outlaw way of living did not stop here. Taking advantage

of his mother's love and of the quiet disposition of Amadeo, almost every day he showed the very greatest need of money.

"I've got to have a hundred pesetas," he would say. "I've just *got* to have them! If you people don't come across, well, all right! I'll get them, some way. But perhaps you'll be sorry then, you didn't give them to me!"

He was mad for enjoyment. When his mother tried to warn and advise him, saying: "Why don't you work, you young wretch? Don't you see how your father does?" — he would retort:

"I don't call *that* living, to work! I'd rather go hang myself, than live the way the old man lives!"

You would have thought Rafaela was his slave, by the lack of decency and respect he showed her. When he called her, he would hardly condescend to look at her at all. He spoke little to his father, and what he said was rough and harsh. The worst boy in the world could not have acted with more insolence. His wild spirit, lusting pleasure, seemed to burn with an instinctive flame of hate.

One night when Amadeo came home from the Casino where he and Don Adolfo, with the druggist and a few other such-like worthies, were wont to meet every Saturday, he found the door of his shop ajar. This astonished him. He raised his voice and began to call:

"Manolo! You, Manolo!"

Rafaela answered him, from the back room of the house:

"He's not here."

"Do you know whether he's going to come back soon? I want to know, before locking up."

A short silence followed. After a bit, Rafaela answered:

"You'd better lock up, anyhow."

There seemed to be something like a sob of grief in the voice of the poor woman. The old engineer, alarmed by a presentiment of something terrible, strode through the shop and went on into the house. Rafaela was sitting in front of the stove, in the kitchen, her hands humbly crossed on her lap, her eyes full of tears, her white hair rumpled up, as if some parricide hand had furiously seized her head. Zureda took hold of his wife by the shoulders and forced her to get up.

"What — what's happened?" he stammered.

Rafaela's nose was all bloody, her forehead was bruised and her hands bore lacerations.

"What's the matter with you?" repeated the engineer.

Old and dull as were his eyes, now they blazed up again with that red lightning of death which, twenty years before, had sent him to prison. Rafaela was terrified, and tried to lie out of it.

"It's nothing, Amadeo," she stammered. "Nothing, I tell you. Let me tell you. I — I fell — that's the living truth!"

But Zureda shook the truth out of her with threats, almost with violence.

"Manolo's been beating you, eh? He has, hasn't he?"

She began to sob, still trying to deny it, not wanting to accuse her heart's darling. The old engineer repeated, trembling with rage:

"He beat you, eh? What?"

Rafaela took a long time to answer. She was afraid to speak, but finally she confessed everything.

"Yes, yes, he did. Oh — it's terrible!"

"What did he beat you for?"

"Because he wanted money."

"God! The swine!"

The rage and pain of the old convict burst out in a leonine roar, that filled the kitchen.

"He told you that?" demanded Amadeo. "Said he wanted money?"

"Yes."

"How much?"

"Twenty-five pesetas. I refused as long as I could. But what could I do? Oh, if you'd seen him then, you wouldn't have known him. I was awfully scared — thought he was going to kill me ——"

As she said this, she covered her eyes with her hands. She seemed to be shutting out from them, together with the ugly vision of what had just happened, some other sight — the sight of something horrible, something long-past, something quite the same.

Zureda, afraid of showing the tumultuous rage in his heart, said nothing more. The most ominous memories crowded his mind. A long, long time ago, before he had gone to jail, Don Tomás in the course of an unforgettable conversation had told him that Manolo Berlanga maltreated Rafaela. And all these years afterward, when he was once more a free man, Don Adolfo had said the same thing about young Manolo. Remembering this strange agreement of opinions, Amadeo Zureda felt a bitter and inextinguishable hate against the whole race of the silversmith — a race accursed, it seemed, which had come into the world only to hurt and wound him in his dearest affections.

Next morning the old man, who had hardly slept more than an hour or two, woke early.

"What time is it?" asked he.

Rafaela had already risen. She answered:

"Almost six."

"Has Manolo come back?"

"Not yet."

The old engineer got out of bed, dressed as usual and went down to his shop. Rafaela kept watch on him. The apparent calm of the old man looked suspicious. Noon came, and Manolo did not return for dinner.

Night drew on, nor did he come back to sleep. Zureda and his wife went to bed early. A few days drifted along.

Sunday morning, Zureda was sitting at the door of his shop. It was just eleven. Women, some with mantillas, others with but a simple kerchief knotted about their heads, were going to mass. High up in the Gothic steeple, the bells were swinging, gay and clangorous. A neighbor, passing, said to the engineer:

"Well, Manolo's showed up."

"When?" asked Zureda, phlegmatically.

"Last night."

"Where did you see him?"

"At Honorio's inn."

"A great one, that boy is! He's certainly some fine lad! Never came near *me!*"

The day drew on, without anything happening. Cautiously the engineer guarded against telling Rafaela that their son had returned. A little while before supper, giving her the excuse that Don Adolfo was waiting for him at the Casino, Zureda left the house and made his way to the inn where Manolo was wont to meet his rough friends. There he found him, indeed, gaming with cards.

"I've got something to say to you," said he.

The young man threw his cards on the table and got up. He was tall, slim and good-looking; and in the thin line of his lips and the penetrant gaze of his greenish eyes lay something bold, defiant.

The two men went out into the street, and, saying no word, walked to the outskirts of the town. When Amadeo thought they had come to a good place, he stopped and looked his son fair in the face.

"I've brought you out here," said he, "to tell you you're never coming back to my house. Understand me?"

Manolo nodded "Yes."

"I'm throwing you out," continued the old man. "Get that, too! I'm throwing you out, because I won't deal with a dog like you. I won't have one anywhere around! I tell you that not as father to son, but as one man to another, so you can come back at me if you want to. Understand? I'm ready for you! That's why I've brought you 'way out here."

As he spoke, slowly his stern spirit caught fire. His cheeks grew pale, and in his jacket pockets his fists knotted. Manolo's savage blood began to boil, as well.

"Don't make me say anything, you!" he flung at his father.

He turned as if to walk away. His voice, his gesture, the scornful shrug of his shoulders, with which he seemed to underscore his words, all were those of a ruffian and a bully. Any body would have said that the tough, swaggering silversmith lived again, in him. Zureda controlled his anger, and began once more:

"If you want to fight, you'll be a fool to wait till to-morrow. I'm ready for it, now."

"Crazy, you?" demanded the youth.

"No!"

"Well, you act it!"

"You're wrong. I know all about *you* — I know you've been beating your mother. And you can't pay for a thing like that even with every drop of your blood. No, sir! Not even the last drop of pig's blood you've got in your body would pay for that!"

Amadeo Zureda was afraid of himself. He had begun to shiver. All the hate that, long ago, had flung him upon Berlanga, now had burst forth again in a fresh, strong, overwhelming torrent.

Suddenly Manolo stepped up to his father and seized him by the lapel.

"You going to shut up?" he snarled, in rage. "Or are you bound to drive me to it?"

Zureda's answer was a smash in the face. Then the two men fell upon each other, first with their fists, presently with knives. At that moment the old man saw in the face of the man he had believed his son, the same expression of hate that twenty years ago had distorted the features of Manolo Berlanga. Those eyes, that mouth all twisted into a grimace of ferocity, that slim and feline body now trembling with rage, all were like the silversmith's. The look of the father came back again in that of the son, as exactly as if both faces had been poured in the same mold.

And for the first time, after so long a time, the old engineer clearly understood everything.

Annihilated by the realization of this new disaster, no longer having any heart to defend himself, the wretched man let his arms fall. And just at this moment Manolo, beside himself with rage, plunged the fatal blade into his breast.

Now with his vengeance complete, the parricide took to flight.

Amadeo Zureda, dying, was carried to the hospital. There, that same night, Don Adolfo came to see him. The good neighbor's grief was terrible, even to the point of the grotesque.

"Is it true, what people are saying?" he asked weeping. "Is it true?"

The wounded man had hardly strength enough to press his hand a very little.

"Good-by, Adolfo," he stammered. "Now I know what I — had to know. You told me, but I — couldn't believe it. But now I know you — were right. Manolo was not — my son —— "

China

INTRODUCTION

NOBODY knows exactly when Chinese literature began, though it is generally maintained that the writings of Confucius, in the Sixth Century B.C., are the first that have come down to us. Fiction as a recognised art form (apart from poetic allegories, anecdotes and fables), was probably not introduced into China until the time of the Mongol Dynasty, which began in 1200 A.D.

The famous story of *The Three Kingdoms*, by Lo Kuan-chung belongs to this epoch (1200–1368), and was followed by a large number of other historical novels and romances. Long novels of war and adventure were especially popular throughout the Mongol and Ming (1368–1644) Dynasties.

The celebrated collection of forty stories known as the *Chin Ku Ch'i Kuan* (*Marvelous Tales, Ancient and Modern*) is a product of the late Ming epoch.

The succeeding (Manchu) Dynasty witnessed the production of P'u Sung-Ling's equally famous *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio*, most of which are far shorter than those in the earlier collection.

It was during the last part of the Seventeenth Century that the Chinese novel reached the apex of its development. The anonymous and inordinately long *Hung Lou Meng* is generally regarded as the masterpiece of Chinese fiction.

During the past two centuries and a half there has been a certain development in the technique of story-writing, but there are very few outstanding masterpieces.

THE MIRACULOUS PORTRAIT

(Anonymous: 15th Century A.D., or before)

THIS is one of the famous longer stories in *The Marvelous Tales*. It is a characteristic work, showing as it does the writer's ingenuity in telling a straightforward narrative of considerable length. It is an almost perfect example of what I have elsewhere called a miniature novel. By the insertion of longer descriptions and a more detailed analysis of character and motive, it could easily be expanded to the length of the average novel. Yet, as it stands, it is artistically complete.

Nothing is known of the author.

The translation here used was made expressly for this collection, Professor Frank W. Chandler, and appears here for the first time.

THE MIRACULOUS PORTRAIT

UNDER the Ming Dynasty, in the district of Hiango-ho, the province of Pe-tchi-li, and the department of Chun-tien-fou, lived a governor called Ni, whose double name was Cheou-kien and whose honorific name was Y-tchi. He possessed thousands of pieces of gold, fertile lands, and a magnificent mansion. His wife Tchin-chi had borne him but one son, who was surnamed Chen-k'i, which is to say, 'worthy continuator of the reputation of his father.' Scarcely had this son grown to man's estate when he took a wife, and soon after he had the misfortune to lose his mother. His father, the governor, resigned his office and did not remarry. Although advanced in years, he was still sound in mind and full of strength and health. The need of collecting his rents and interest offered ample outlet to his indefatigable activity. He would have blushed to think of allowing his days to pass idly amid the pleasures which his opulence and luxury provided.

One day, when the old man had just reached his seventy-ninth year, his son, Ni-chen-k'i, addressed him, saying: "It is rare that any man should live to the age of seventy; antiquity offers us but few examples. Now, my father, you are just entering your seventy-ninth year; in one year more your eightieth year will weigh upon your head. Why not relieve yourself of the heavy cares that overwhelm you by confiding to me the administration of all your affairs? Will you not be happier in dividing your time between the pleasures of the table and the comforts of tranquillity?"

"If I have but one more day to live," replied the old man, shaking

his head, "I will continue for that day my administration; in doing so, I will spare you many fatigues of mind and body, and I will make certain economies to provide for your future needs. So long as these two frail limbs of mine can still support me, why should it not be my privilege to conduct my own affairs?"

Each year, in the tenth month, the governor was accustomed to go among his farmers to collect his rents, and to remain thus occupied until the new year. The good old man would become for all the people of the household the object of a thousand delicate attentions; it was to him that every thought then turned. Fowls and pheasants, delicious wines and fruit preserves were not spared to multiply his pleasures.

That year, the two last months passed so rapidly for him that, without realizing it, he remained somewhat longer in the country than ordinary. One day, in an interval of leisure, he went out in the afternoon to inspect his property and to enjoy while walking the varied aspects of the rural scene. Suddenly, he saw coming towards him a young girl accompanied by an old, white-haired woman. She turned toward a small body of water and, bending over its margin, she began to wash certain garments and to beat them upon a white and polished stone. Although this young girl was clad like a simple village maiden, her face shone with a freshness and a modest grace which made the beholder forget her humble station.

Her locks were of a shining black like the lacquer of the Tsi tree; her almond eyes gleamed like the waves which played at her feet; her fingers were white and delicate as the young stalks of the Tsong; one would have said that her two graceful eyebrows had been designed by a skilful pencil; a robe of common stuff clung to her light and slender figure, bringing out its attractions even better than finest silk, and displaying its charms better than any rare tissue embellished with rich embroidery; her head was surmounted with flowers which appeared fairer than any pearl ornament or than any headdress woven of gold. This young beauty had seen some eighteen summers.

Scarcely had the governor perceived her than a secret agitation affected his senses and appeared upon his face; his eyes sparkled, all his body trembled, he remained mute with admiration.

After having finished washing the garments, the young girl left the waterside, and departed, following the lady with white hair. The old man observed her with emotion, and saw that, after having passed many houses of the village, she knocked at the door of a little white cottage surrounded with a hedge of interlaced bamboos. There she entered and disappeared.

The governor returned in haste, called a farmer, and told him in detail of what had just happened. "Go," said he, "find the parents of this girl, and bring me full information concerning her. Ask above all if she is betrothed to any one; if not, it is my intention to marry her as a second wife. But I do not know whether she will deign to heed my supplications."

The farmer left at once, impatient to execute the orders of his master. It did not take him long to learn that the name of the family of the girl was Mei, and that her father had been a man of the learned class of the first distinction. Having lost both him and her mother in her early infancy, she had been reared by her grandmother, whom she had never left for a moment. She was now eighteen, but she had been promised as yet to no one.

Having obtained the necessary information, the farmer called upon the lady with the white hair. "My master," said he, "has observed your granddaughter, and, charmed by her beauty and her distinguished manner, he desires to ask you for her in marriage as his second wife. Although he is not of the highest rank, I can assure you that since it is years ago that he lost his first wife, and since he has no one to govern his house, the moment that she becomes his wife, she will be richly clad and luxuriously nourished, and that in short nothing will be left undone to satisfy her desires. You yourself, madam, you may count on his giving you to the end of your days tea and rice and fine garments in abundance; and when your last hour shall sound, he will make it his duty to conduct you to the field of repose amid all due ceremonies and with a pomp worthy of his station and his fortune. All that I fear, madam, is that you may not know how to profit by the good fortune which outruns even your desires."

In listening to these words, which appeared to her beautiful as silk ornamented with flowers and embroidery, the old lady made an affirmative sign; and as the marriage appeared to her prepared in advance by heaven, this single interview sufficed to ratify it.

The farmer returned to find the governor, who was transported with joy at the news. He chose his bridal presents and examined the calendar to find a propitious day. Yet he feared that his son might interpose obstacles to the projected union. Now, as it was at the farm that the betrothal occurred, it was there also that the marriage was accomplished. On the evening of the wedding, it was truly a touching spectacle to see the old man and his young bride. The following passage drawn from gallant verses made on that occasion will better explain my thought.

"On one side stands a white-haired man covered with a vestment of dark crêpe; on the other a young girl with black and flowing tresses, rich in her garments and her charms. The twisted tree and a young and fragrant vine embracing its dry branches might offer some idea of this couple strangely contrasted. One trembles with inquietude, the other is agitated with a secret fear. He fears that in the coming contest his powers will not be equal to the ardor which animates him."

As soon as night had come, the old man nobly sustained the combat which crowned his vows, and more than once renewed his ancient prowess.

On the fourth day, the governor ordered a sedan chair and conducted

home his new bride to present her to his son and to his son's wife. All the folk of the house, men, women, young girls, hastened to render to her their respects, and, after prostrating themselves to the earth, they called her Siao-naï-naï, or young bride. The governor distributed among them all pieces of rare stuff suitable to their taste and their condition; and each was enchanted with the master and with his presents. But the son, Ni-chen-k'i, did not share the general joy. It is true that openly he did not dare to manifest his discontent. But, when he could speak aside to his wife, he might not longer restrain his indignation.

"To think," said he to her, "that this old fellow should wound every sentiment of propriety, he who totters under the weight of years, and whose life is like the flame of a lamp exposed to the wind. Can one act thus without foreseeing the consequences? For five years, ten years, perhaps, while he remains in the world, does he think that he is doing a praiseworthy thing, even a moral thing, to marry this young person, fresh and brilliant as a branch burgeoning into flower, one who as a reward for her tender attachment can receive only cold and impotent caresses? Are there many octogenarians who would take a companion of eighteen years? Soon the decrepitude of her husband will render him insupportable to his young wife. Deceived in her legitimate ardor, she will abandon herself to vice, and her shame, her dishonor, will react upon our family. In short, is not this marriage comparable to a plague with which heaven strikes us on the eve of an abundant harvest? After having captured the confidence of her old husband, she will withdraw now one object, now another, to make herself rich at our expense. One day, she will ask of him clothing, another day, jewels. Blinded by his foolish passion, he will dare to refuse her nothing, until at last, deprived of all, he will see realized in his own case the proverb: "When the tree is cut down, the birds fly away." Like the worm which eats the heart of the tree, and the insect which devours the grain, she will little by little absorb the fortune of our father and reduce him to beggary; then, some bright morning, she will pack her baggage and go to enjoy elsewhere the fruit of her pillage. This young woman, with her graces and vaunted attractions, has she not the appearance of a courtesan? Wholly lacking in dignity and nobility, she has nothing which would indicate a distinguished origin. Devoted companion of the old man whom she has rendered the slave of all her caprices, she gives herself airs of importance, and affects the tone and manners of a person of quality. What is her rôle with our father? Is it not that of a concubine and a domestic? Let us hope that some day he will repulse her pretensions. Can one conceive the blindness of a father who enjoins upon every one to designate this creature only by the most noble name? Can she think that we will submit to this humiliating etiquette and that we will obey her like servants? An excellent means to give her an exalted idea of herself and to draw down upon us ere long from her the most cruel affronts!"

It was thus that the two murmured together and allowed themselves to utter the most gross accusations against their relatives. These grumblings, overheard by the indiscreet, were passed from mouth to mouth and soon reached the ears of the old man.

Although the governor was afflicted by such scandalous talk, he managed to keep within his own breast the grief that troubled him. Happily, his young wife was endowed with a disposition sweet and affable; full of deference and of submission before her superiors, she received with perfect grace those placed beneath her, so that in the house she rendered every one most happy.

Two months had scarcely passed before she found herself with child. She hid this knowledge so well that there was no one except her husband who was in the secret. Three months, six months passed without her condition exciting the least suspicion; at last, in the ninth month she brought to birth a son.

At the news, all the house was struck with astonishment and admiration.

Since this day was the ninth of the ninth moon, the child was called Tchong-yang-eul, a name recalling the precise epoch in which he came into the world.

The eleventh day of the same month was the birthday of the governor, now entering his eightieth year. His mansion was soon filled with a crowd of visitors who came to present to him their compliments and felicitations.

The old man gave them a splendid repast to celebrate at once the anniversary of his birth and the ceremony of bathing the newborn on his third day.

"My lord," said the guests, "on seeing you obtain a second son at years so advanced, it is easy to believe that your body has lost nothing of its vigor, and that you will attain to the last chapter of old age."

But this event, which rendered happy the father, excited in secret the anger of Ni-chen-k'i. "Every one knows," said he, "that at sixty years man ordinarily loses that quality which characterizes his virile period; and the truer this must be at eighty. Has one ever seen a dry tree crowned with flowers? For myself, I do not know to what to attribute this affair, but I am convinced that my father is completely a stranger to the birth of this child. Decidedly, I cannot recognize as my brother one whose illegitimacy is only too evident."

These remarks came also to the ears of the old man, who kept them in his heart.

But time passed with the rapidity of the arrow which cuts the air. A year had flown since the birth of Tchong-yang-eul. It was the period in which is celebrated the ancient ceremony called Souï-pan-hoeï. All his relatives and friends came to felicitate him. But Ni-chen-k'i left the house to avoid keeping company with these new guests.

The old man, who knew the secret motive of this conduct, made no attempt to call him back and invite him to the family feast, which was preparing. He remained with his relatives and drank with them all day. Nevertheless, he was so oppressed by the worry caused him by his elder son that he could not open his mouth to utter a single word.

As Ni-chen-k'i was naturally avaricious and jealous, a single consideration absorbed his thought: it was that Tchong-yang-eul would inherit some day a part of the property of his father. There was the true motive which prevented him from recognizing the child as his brother. To begin with, he sought revenge by calumny and scandal; later he went so far as to maltreat the son and the mother.

The governor, whose knowledge and penetration had led him to the most eminent offices, did not take the trouble to fathom the secret springs of this conduct. Unfortunately, he felt each day the progress of the years, and he feared that he would not live until Tchong-yang-eul should have attained his majority. "When I am no longer there," he said, "this child will fall beneath the power of his elder brother. If I treat the latter with all the severity that he merits, it will furnish him later a thousand pretexts of animosity and vengeance against my second son; it will be better to use patience and tact."

If the sight of the young child always caused a redoubling of tenderness to the father, he could not defend himself from a feeling of pity in seeing its mother, so weak and timid, who would soon find herself without support. This idea was present to him without ceasing, and induced in him regrets the most bitter and grief and despair.

Four springs passed, and the child reached its fifth year. The old man, seeing that he was endowed with rare intelligence, and that, at the same time, he loved to play and frolic, thought of sending him to school in order that he might acquire by solid studies ability and reputation. Since the elder brother bore the name of Chen-k'i, he wished to call this one Chen-chu, an expression signifying also 'worthy successor of his father.'

He chose a fortunate day, prepared a collation, and ordered Chen-chu to go invite the master destined to give him lessons.

Now this master was the same to whom the governor had confided the education of his grandchild. Henceforth the young uncle and the nephew should have together the same teacher, one stone making, according to the proverb, two blows.

Who could have expected that Ni-chen-k'i would agree with his father? Seeing that the young child had been surnamed Chen-chu, an expression which put him in the same line as himself, he experienced the greatest discontent. "Furthermore," said he to himself, "since my son is studying with Chen-chu, must he not call him uncle? This title, fortified by long habit, will inspire in him a sentiment of superiority which may result in

tyranny. It will be better to withdraw my son from the school and to give him another master."

Accordingly, he would seek out his son, under the pretext of the latter's being sick, and often make him absent himself from the class for several days together.

At first, the governor supposed that his grandson had in fact a real illness; but at the end of some time, the master informed him that Ni-chen-k'i had found another teacher for his son, and that thus the two children were attending separate schools. He added that he could not divine the motive for such a change.

This affair would have had no unfortunate consequence if the old man had not known of it. But at these tidings he fell into a violent rage. He wished at first to go seek his son and make him explain his conduct. But, after some instants of reflection, he said: "Since heaven has given me a son so perverse and unnatural, of what use is it to reproach him? It will be wiser not to concern myself with him."

The governor returned home, his soul overwhelmed with grief. In his trouble, he stumbled over the sill of the door and fell backwards. Meï-chi ran to help him up and led him to a couch; he had lost his senses. Forthwith she called a skilled physician, who, after having felt the pulse of the old man, declared that he was suffering from fever. He bathed the patient's face with warm water to call back his senses, and caused him to be carried to his bed.

Although the old man had regained conciousness, he was paralyzed in all his members and could not make the slightest movement. Meï-chi would not leave his pillow. Now she caused to be heated bouillions, now she prepared prescribed potions, and rendered to her husband all the services which her tenderness could suggest.

When the old man had taken many medicines without any improvement in his condition, the doctor opened a vein; then he announced that his art could do no more, and that the sick man had but two days left to live.

At this news, Ni-chen-k'i came several times to look upon the patient and to assure himself of the truth of what the physician had said; and, seeing that the state of the old man grew worse from hour to hour, he became convinced that he would never recover from this sickness. Accordingly, he began to raise a disturbance in the house, to scold the servants, to strike the valets, and to pack up the effects of his father. The old man perceived this, and the grief that he felt shortened his days. The young wife did not cease to weep and to tremble. The child went no longer to his classes, but remained in the room to watch his father.

The governor, feeling that his end was approaching, called to him his older son and taking a list which contained the deeds to his lands and his houses and the names of all those attached to his service, handed it to

him and said: "Chen-chu is but five years of age; it is necessary that some one should be concerned with his upbringing. His mother is too young to administer my household; if I give her a part of my fortune, she will not know how to regulate its use. I prefer, therefore, to make you my heir. If Chen-chu attains manhood, I pray you to stand toward him as a father. You will seek for him a mate, and you will give him a little house and five or six acres of good land in order that he may be protected from hunger and cold and may provide for all his needs. These different recommendations are detailed from point to point in the book I hand you. As to whether you wish to live together or apart, that is a question which I leave to your choice. If Meï-chi wishes to form some new attachment, let her follow her inclination. If, on the other hand, she persists in remaining a widow and in passing her days with her son, exercise no constraint to prevent her. When I am no more, execute promptly my last wishes. By so doing, you will display your filial piety. Then I shall be able to repose in peace in the dark empire."

Ni-chen-k'i took the book and at the first glance he saw clearly expounded all the details of the inheritance. His face brightened and with a radiant air he said: "My father, have no fear, no inquietude. I will discharge with religious zeal all the orders which you have just given me."

Without losing time, he picked up the book and left, leaping with joy.

Meï-chi, seeing him already at a distance, began to sob and burst into tears. Then, showing her son to the old man, she said: "This child whom you are treating like an enemy, is he not your legitimate offspring? Is he not of your blood, a portion of yourself? and yet you abandon to your elder son the possession of all your property? How do you expect your son and me to live for the rest of our days?"

"You do not understand the true motive for my conduct," replied the governor. "Seeing that Chen-k'i is a man without principles or loyalty, I have thought that if I divided my fortune equally between my two sons, the life of this tender child would be exposed to the greatest dangers. I have preferred to satisfy Chen-k'i, to abandon to him the inheritance of all my goods, in order that in the end you should have nothing to fear from his jealousy and inveterate hatred."

"However that may be," replied Meï-chi, "you know the old axiom: that a son, whether he be born of a wife of the first or of the second rank, is always a son. If, therefore, a father allows himself to be blinded by partiality, and gives all to one at the expense of the other, he cannot escape being treated with scorn."

"These observations," said the governor, "will not change in the least my intention; I have my reasons for acting thus. Profit by the time while I am still alive to put your son under the tutelage of Chen-k'i; and sooner or later, when I am no more, choose a husband according to your heart with whom you may finish happily the remainder of your

days. But be sure not to remain with my sons; they will cause you continual distress."

"What words have escaped from your lips?" cried Meï-chi. "Your servant belongs to a well-bred family; she would reject to the end of her life the thought of forming a new alliance. Furthermore, have I not a son to whom I owe myself wholly? Have I a heart hard enough to detach myself from him?"

"Can it be," continued the governor, "that you are firmly decided to remain always a widow? Do you not fear that you will soon repent such a decision?"

Meï-chi sealed by a vow the resolve that she had just expressed.

"Ah, well!" said the governor, "since your resolution is not to be broken, have no worry as to your future and that of your son: your existence is assured."

At these words, he sought beneath his pillow, and withdrew an object which he handed to Meï-chi. At first, she thought it to be a rolled manuscript, which contained the gift of some portion of his wealth. But, at a second glance, she recognized that it was a painting, a foot wide and three feet long.

"What do you wish that I do with this painting?" cried Meï-chi.

"It is a family portrait," replied the governor; "it conceals a mystery of the highest importance. Keep this painting religiously, and above all refrain from showing it to any one. But when your son has grown up, if Chen-k'i gives him no sign of interest, hide your secret within your heart and wait until there is pointed out to you a wise magistrate, honest and clear-sighted. You will present to him this painting and after having informed him of my last wishes in the matter, you will beg him to give you the solution of the enigma here contained. The desired explanation will naturally come to his mind, and immediately you will find the means of living, you and your son, and you will even procure all the blessings of fortune."

Meï-chi took and concealed the painting, to which we will return ere long.

The governor lived several days more. His tender wife received his last sigh, breathed out in the midst of a slow agony. He died at the age of eighty-four.

"Heaven gives us a portion of existence; we expend it in a hundred different fashions. But one day or another death arrives and makes all our projects vanish."

Let us now return to Ni-Chen-k'i. Seeing himself in possession of the book containing the deeds of the property of his father, he demanded the keys of all the apartments. Then each day he examined the various furnishings and made in advance his inventory. How could he have had time to go to his father to inform himself of the sick man's condition?

But when that father had uttered his last sigh, Meï-Chi sent a servant to bear him the sad news. Ni-chen-k'i and his wife ran in all haste, and after having scarcely expressed their regret, they returned home at the end of half an hour, leaving to Meï-chi the care of watching over the remains of her lord.

Happily, before their arrival, she had herself prepared everything necessary for the funeral. After having enveloped the body of her husband with his last vestments, and placed it in its coffin, she assumed the garb of a widow, and remained with her son to protect the funeral hall. From morning until night she wept and sobbed and never for an instant left the bier, which she fondly embraced.

Chen-k'i occupied himself only with making and receiving visits; as for mourning and grief, he remained a complete stranger to them. He selected a day of the same week in order to celebrate the obsequies. Scarcely had the sad ceremony been concluded than he went to the room of Meï-chi, overturned the coffers, and hunted through the boxes, fearing, no doubt, that his father might have left there some money as a result of his economies.

Meï-chi, endowed with great penetration, was fearful lest he should discover the painting. She took two small caskets which she had brought to the household, opened the first, and after having withdrawn certain ancient garments, she engaged Chen-k'i and his wife in examining them. Chen-k'i, seeing their little worth, renounced his intention of pushing further his researches. Finally, he and his wife withdrew, leaving the house in complete disorder. Meï-chi, overwhelmed with a thousand sad thoughts, did not cease to utter cries and sobs. The young child, witness of the despair of his mother, mingled his tears with hers, and gave vent to heart rending lamentations.

If one were as insensible as a statue of clay, how could he restrain his tears? If one had a heart of marble, how could he defend himself from a feeling of compassion?

The next day, Ni-chen-k'i sent for a carpenter, visited with him the room of the governor, and ordered him to reconstruct it for the uses of the new owner's son. As for Meï-chi and her young child, he sent them to a distance, to a dilapidated house situated at the rear of a garden, and gave them as furnishings only a poor pallet mounted on four shaky legs, a table of rude planks, and some worm-eaten stools. But he provided them with no kitchen utensils.

At first, Meï-chi remained in her room and did nothing but give orders to the two persons who served them. Then she dismissed the elder and retained only the younger, who was eleven or twelve years of age. This girl, deeply attached to her mistress, went each day from house to house begging rice and herbs suitable for soup, and sacrificing herself to the point of forgetting her own needs.

Meï-chi could not permit such abnegation, and, overcoming her natural timidity, she went about herself asking the rice which was necessary and constructing a little oven of earth and preparing their modest repasts. From morning to evening, and during a part of the night, she labored with her needle, and, with the product of these vigils, she purchased the cheapest vegetables, which were almost her sole food. Her young son attended the classes of a neighboring schoolmaster, and it was needful for her to pay in addition the cost of this education.

Many times Chen-k'i ordered his wife to persuade Meï-chi to contract a second union, and he even sent to her marriage brokers to manage such an affair. But, seeing that the resistance of Meï-chi was invincible, he ceased to trouble her.

Inasmuch as Meï-chi was endowed with a patient and resigned nature, and bore all things without murmuring, Chen-k'i, although violent and hot-headed by disposition, at length paid no attention to her or to her son. But the time passed with rapidity of the arrow which cuts the air. Chen-chu grew insensibly and attained his fourteenth year. Now, Meï-chi had always maintained the greatest reserve concerning what had passed, and had abstained from making the least allusion to it in the presence of her son. She feared that he might commit some indiscretion, which would reawaken against her the animosity of Ni-chen-k'i. But her son was now fourteen years of age, and his mind had already acquired such keenness that it became impossible to hide from him longer the truth.

One day, he begged his mother to buy for him a garment of silk. She replied that she had no money.

"My father," replied Chen-chu, "once exercised the functions of governor, and he left but two children. Behold now the brilliant position of my elder brother: he is favored with honors and riches; and I, I cannot even procure a garment for which I have need. What is the meaning of this shocking inequality? Well, mother, since you lack money, I will go and ask it of my brother."

So saying, he departed; Meï-chi ran after him and held him by his coat: "My son," said she to him, "is a garment of such importance that you would purchase it by an act of humiliation? You know the proverb 'Happiness is like a treasure; you increase it by taking care of it.' So long as you are still young, I dress you in common stuff, but when you are grown you shall have garments of silk. If I were to do the opposite to-day, and to clothe you in silk, I should not have even ordinary cloth with which to dress you later on. Wait two years more, and, if you have made progress in your studies, I shall not hesitate to sell something in order to procure you fine garments. It is not well to irritate your elder brother; I beg you, refrain from provoking his wrath."

"You are right," replied Chen-chu.

But these words were not sincere, and his heart was far from speaking in accord with his lips.

"I know," said he to himself, "that my father had much gold and silver and a vast domain; he must have divided these things equally between us two. Can it be supposed that I shall remain forever with my mother and marry only at the end of my career? Is it necessary that I should abandon my studies, and, in order to live, that I should be reduced to exercise the meanest of professions? On the one hand, my elder brother, who lives in opulence, shows me no sign of interest; on the other hand, my mother cannot procure a piece of cloth and awaits the moment to sell something to give me garments. The language that she has used to me suggests a mystery. Moreover, my elder brother is not a tiger to devour men; what have I to fear from him?"

After saying these words, he went forth secretly and proceeded to the magnificent mansion occupied by his elder brother. He asked for his brother, and, on perceiving him, made him a deep salutation.

"What are you doing here?" cried Chen-k'i, struck with astonishment.

"All the world knows," retorted Chen-chu, "that I am the son of an illustrious magistrate; nevertheless, I am covered with rags, and I incite the contempt of the public. I have come expressly to ask of you a piece of silk in order that I may wear a worthy garment."

"If you wish clothing, you have only to ask it of your mother."

"The possessions of Lord Ni, our father, are enjoyed, not by my mother, but by you."

On hearing these words, which appeared more mature than the speaker's age, Chen-k'i became flushed with wrath. "Who is it that has so sharpened your tongue? Who has incited you to come and ask clothing of me in order to have a pretext to quarrel with me concerning my wealth?"

"Sooner or later that wealth will be divided. But it is not that which concerns me to-day. For the moment, I ask only the garments which correspond to my rank and my birth."

"It is well for you, little bastard, to speak of rank and birth! If Lord Ni, my father, has left immense treasure, has he not, to divide it, a son and a grandson born of legitimate wives? As for you, whose birth is more than questionable, you have nothing to do here: get out! I know full well that you have not come here of your own will. Some one has sent you to make this scandalous scene. But be careful that I do not forget myself. I shall know how to expel you, you and your mother, from the retreat that I have so generously accorded to you, and to reduce you to the condition of not knowing where to lay your head."

"I am, like you, the son of the governor. Why raise doubts as to the legitimacy of my birth? What do you mean by forgetting yourself? Have you formed a project of shortening my days in order to be able to dispose alone of the inheritance?"

"Little beast!" cried Chen-k'i, his eyes flashing with wrath. "You wish then to push my patience beyond bounds?"

At these words, he caught Chen-chu by his coat, shook him with violence, and overwhelmed him with a rain of blows.

The poor child, bruised and covered with contusions, barely escaped, and ran weeping to recount his misadventure to his mother.

"I forbade you," said Meï-chi, displeased, "to go and provoke his wrath. You have been deaf to my counsels. He has misused you; and it serves you right."

In saying these words, the good mother took the skirt of her robe and rubbed gently the wounds with which the boy's head was covered. But, at the sight of these wounds, two streams of tears escaped from her eyes.

"A young widow embraces her orphan son. Deprived of all resources, she can scarcely guard him from hunger and from cold. Because she has lost the sole friend that she had in the world, she beholds withering far from the parent trunk two branches which should have flowered together."

Meï-chi was overwhelmed with a thousand unhappy thoughts. Fearing lest Chen-k'i should keep his resentment, she dispatched to him the young girl who served her, in order to beg him to excuse the folly of a schoolboy, who, ignorant of the ways of the world, had imprudently offended his elder brother and provoked his severity.

But the wrath of Chen-k'i was far from being appeased. The next day, he called together all the members of his family, without forgetting Meï-chi and her son, in order to make them aware of the last wishes of his father.

"Respectable relatives whom I see here assembled," said he to them, "I assure you that any one but I would not have deigned to have provided at his own expense for this creature and her son. Yesterday, Chen-chu came to dispute with me the right to my goods, and has allowed himself to utter insults which I have been obliged to check for fear that, later, age would but augment his demands and his quarrelsome disposition. To-day I am about to give to the son and to the mother a dwelling and seven or eight acres of land; and in doing this, I am only conforming to the will of my father, which I wish to execute with religious care. Approach, respectable relatives, and confirm by your own eyes the truth as I tell it to you."

The relatives, who had long known the violent character of Chen-k'i, and who furthermore saw that the testament was indeed written by the hand of the governor, were careful not to contradict Chen-k'i for fear of drawing down upon themselves his ill-will.

"With a thousand pieces of gold," said those who wished to stand in his good graces, "one could not procure the signature of a man already dead. Yes, we recognize fully the hand of the governor, there can not be the least doubt upon that point."

Even those most affected by the misfortunes of Chen-chu and his

mother dared not raise their voices in their favor. "Are there many men," said they, "who have every day enough to provide for their needs? Are there many women who can marry with a dowry and a trousseau? Now these two at least possess a dwelling and land which have cost them nothing. They will only need courage and good-will to make this property worth something. Not only will they have all the rice they wish, but they will be able to have more and to sell it to advantage."

Meï-chi, who had already been relegated to a corner of the garden, knew perfectly the worth of the gifts of Chen-k'i. But it was necessary to obey and to accept his division. She led away her son, saluting her relatives and taking farewell of them, after having prostrated herself before the book of her husband.

Chen-k'i and his wife relinquished to her some old kitchen utensils as well as the two caskets which she had brought with her. Meï-chi hired a beast of burden, and transported these things to the habitation of which mention has just been made. She perceived here only land overrun with wild weeds and a house ill-built and covered with a few tiles, and long in disrepair. How could she inhabit a cabin with a roof leaking everywhere and a floor dampened always by the humidity of the earth?

Meï-chi swept out a room and set up there a bed. Then she called a farmer, from whom she learned that these seven or eight acres were composed of land of the poorest quality. In the years of abundance they gave only half a harvest, which would not suffice to feed the one who cultivated them; but in bad seasons, one could expect to subsist only as the result of borrowings and sacrifices.

As Meï-chi did not cease to weep, the young scholar, who was endowed with a precocious mind, spoke to her in these terms: "My brother and I are sons of the same father. Why should the will have treated me with such shocking parsimony? There must be involved some secret thus far unknown to me. Is it not possible, for example, that this instrument is false, and that my father, to whom it is ascribed, was altogether a stranger to its writing? You know that in matters of inheritance, justice does not respect the person and has no concern with the illustriousness or the obscurity of the individual. Why not, my mother, go find a magistrate to whom you can make known this revolting inequality? His decision will affirm our rights and end our just regrets."

Meï-chi, seeing herself importuned without ceasing by her son, could no longer keep the secret that she had concealed so many years within her breast.

"My son," said she, "beware of doubting the authenticity of the will. It is true indeed that the governor wrote it from beginning to end with his own hand. Beholding you at a tender age and fearing that your elder brother might plot against your life, he preferred, in order to satisfy the avidity of that brother, to make him his sole heir; but on the eve of your

father's death, he confided to me a painting and recommended that I keep it hidden. 'It contains,' added he, 'a mystery of the highest importance. Wait until there is pointed out to you a wise magistrate endowed with rare intelligence. You will go to him and ask him for an explanation. I promise that you and your son will thereafter have the means of living in happy ease and that until the end of your days you will no longer need to suffer the rigors of poverty.'"

"In view of all this," replied Chen-chu, "why have you not advised me sooner? Where is this painting? I pray you, allow your son to cast his eyes upon it for a moment."

Meï-chi opened the casket and drew forth from it a packet covered with cloth. Under the first envelope there was another of varnished paper. After having removed this with care, she unrolled the painting and spread it out upon a chair. Then, with her son, prostrating her face to the earth, she cried, speaking to the picture: "In a village hut it is not easy to provide a chapel! I beg you to excuse me that I am unable to render to you all the honors that are your due!"

Chen-chu, having finished his pious salutations, rose to examine the painting with the keenest attention. He beheld a personage seated, clad in dark crêpe, his locks white as the snow, and his features so life-like in expression that they might doubt if this were a painting or an actual man. In one hand he held a young child whom he pressed against his breast. With the other, which pointed downward, he seemed to indicate the earth.

The son and the mother reasoned together a long time regarding the painting, without being able to resolve the enigma. At last, weary of questions and conjectures, they were obliged to return it to its envelope. This fruitless endeavor to solve the mystery filled their souls with chagrin and discouragement.

Some days later, Chen-chu went to the neighboring town to seek an able master who might give him the desired explanation. All at once, in passing before the temple of Kouan-in, he perceived a band of villagers bearing a pig and a sheep that they were about to offer in sacrifice in order to propitiate the divinity adored in that place.

Chen-chu stopped, and, lifting his eyes, he perceived an old man, who, leaning upon a bamboo stick, approached the band and asked the reason for the sacrifice that they were about to offer. One of them said: "We trembled beneath the weight of a false accusation, which might have led to capital punishment. Fortunately, a magistrate of this town, who is a man of extraordinary sagacity, has penetrated the secret of this affair, and has restored us to life. To begin with, we had made a vow to the divinity called Kouan-in. To-day, since our prayer has been heard, we come to fulfill our vow in all solemnity."

"What was this calumnious accusation," demanded the old man, "and

in what fashion has the magistrate recognized the injustice of which you were the victims and made clear your innocence?"

"The prefect of the town," replied a man of the band, "had, according to the order of the prince, commanded from ten houses a certain number of suits of armor. I, who am called Tching-ta, I was the director of this enterprise. Among my fellows there was a tailor named Tchao; he was the most skilful worker of all the region. Often he left his home to go to work in the city, and sometimes he would remain away for several days. One day he left and did not return though more than a month had passed. Lieou-chi, his wife, sent in all directions to learn his whereabouts; but some time after his disappearance, the Yellow River cast up upon its banks a corpse the head of which had been crushed. The folk of the countryside having made their declaration to the magistrate of the neighborhood, one among them recognized that the body was that of the tailor Tchao.

"On the eve of the day on which he left his house, we had had, while together, a little altercation. In the heat of the dispute, I entered his house and broke certain objects of small value. That is really all that happened. Who would have thought that his wife would impute to me this murder?

"The prefect of the town, who was named Tsi (he to whom the present prefect has succeeded), believed the accusation, and condemned me to capital punishment. On the pretext that my comrades had not denounced me, he treated them as my accomplices, and included them in the same condemnation. Having been deprived of the right of justifying ourselves and proving our innocence, we remained in prison cells for three whole years. Happily, heaven wished that the cruel magistrate should be replaced by Lord Teng.

"Although he obtained his position by a contest in the province, he is a man of cultivation and the rarest penetration of mind. One day, he came to visit us in prison, in order to examine with deliberation the crime with which we were charged. He listened to us with extreme good-will, and, touched by our tears and the apparent truth of our recital, he commenced to doubt our guilt.

"' I am convinced!' cried he, 'that an altercation at table between comrades could not have excited a hatred deep enough to incite a man to slay his friend.'

"Having heeded our complaint, the magistrate issued an order against the persons whom we indicated to him as the true authors of the crime, in order to submit the affair to a fresh trial.

"Lord Teng, perceiving that the wife of the tailor Tchao would not make a deposition, took upon himself to interrogate her, and asked if she had proceeded to a second marriage. Lieou-chi replied that, being without fortune, it had been impossible for her to remain a widow and that already she had taken another husband.

"'What man have you married?' demanded the magistrate.

"'A workman of the same profession as Tchao, a tailor called Chin-pan-han.'

"Lord Teng caused him to be brought forthwith and asked him how long he had been married to this woman.

"'It was,' replied he, 'a month and more after she became a widow that I married her.'

"'What person acted in this affair as the marriage broker? What wedding presents did you offer him?'

"'During the life of Tchao, he borrowed from your servant seven or eight ounces of silver. As soon as I heard of his death, I went to his widow and urged her to repay me the sum. But Lieou-chi, being unable to pay, begged me to take her as wife to the end that she might thus discharge the debt of her husband. To tell the truth, I have had no need of a marriage broker.'

"'How,' said Lord Teng to him, 'how could an ordinary workman amass so considerable a sum as seven or eight ounces of silver?'

"'It was,' replied Pa-han, 'the fruit of my savings during long years.'

"Lord Teng ordered him to take paper and brush and to figure up the account of the different sums that he had successively loaned, and which formed the total of the debt in question.

"Pa-han soon finished the bill, which was composed of thirty items, the total amounting to seven ounces and eight pence.

"But scarcely had the magistrate cast his eye upon it than he cried with a terrible voice: 'You are the murderer of Tchao! How could you dare calumniate an innocent man?'

"In saying these words, he made a sign to the officers of justice. These, prompt as the lightning, seized the fellow, stretched him on the ground with his stomach downward, and applied the bastinado.

"Since Pa-han continued to refuse to avow his crime, Lord Teng said to him: 'I have discovered your imposture; inasmuch as you have loaned your capital, it is just that you should receive interest. Could you not have divided your funds and confided them in equal parts to several persons? If you loaned the whole sum to the tailor, it is without doubt because you had formed with his wife a guilty alliance. In order to pocket your money, Tchao connived with her and closed his eyes upon your intrigue. Later, being impatient to live together as man and wife, you planned his death, and it is you who have been the instrument of the crime. Furthermore, you have moved Lieou-chi to accuse Tching-ta as the murderer of her husband. The writing of the account that you have just prepared beneath my eyes is exactly the same as that of the accusation; this resemblance confirms my belief. Who can be the assassin of Tchao if not you?'

"The magistrate caused to be brought the wife and ordered that her fingers be bound and twisted that he might extort from her a confession of the crime.

"Suddenly Lieou-chi changed color and became as pale as the guardian of the dark empire. Moved beyond herself, she could not resist the pain of the torture and allowed the confession demanded of her to escape. Pa-han saw himself obliged to follow her example.

"Now it should be known that Pa-han had for a long time enjoyed secret relations with Lieou-chi without their conduct's awakening the least suspicion. Later, their meetings had become more frequent and more intimate. Tchao, perceiving these, and fearing to be a butt of public laughter, had formed the project of separating from her.

"Pa-han, being once upon a time in close conversation with Lieou-chi, counselled her to get rid of Tchao in order that they might live together as man and wife, but she had firmly refused.

"One day, when Tchao returned from his work in the city, Pa-han conducted him adroitly to a tavern and plied him with drink. Then he led him to the shores of the Yellow River, and after having crushed his head with a stone, he threw the body into the stream, where it sank and disappeared.

"When Pa-han believed the affair to be sufficiently forgotten, he asked the widow in marriage, and came to dwell with her in the house of the defunct. Some time after, the body came to the surface and was recognized by many persons.

"Pa-han, having learned that I had had an altercation with Tchao on the eve of the day of his disappearance, urged his wife to formulate a complaint and to throw suspicion for the murder upon me.

"It was only some time after the celebration of the marriage that she knew that Pa-han had taken the life of her husband, but, being married to him, she did not dare to denounce him to justice.

"Lord Teng, having discovered the true culprits, made them suffer the punishment that they so well merited, and pronounced our acquittal.

"These people whom you see are our relatives and neighbors, who have collected among them a subscription to offer a sacrifice and to thank heaven for our deliverance. Tell me, venerable sir, if one can find another such example of wickedness?"

"It is still more difficult," said the old man, "to find a magistrate endowed with such wisdom and marvellous penetration. The inhabitants of our city should esteem themselves happy to possess him."

After having listened attentively to this story, Chen-chu sought out his mother and recounted to her the affair in all its details. "Since we have," said he to her, "so able a magistrate, why do we hesitate to go and present to him the painting, and to explain to him all the circumstances attending it?"

After having given up their own efforts to solve the mystery, they informed themselves of the magistrate's audience day. Meï-chi rose early in the morning, ordered her son of fourteen to carry the painting and

presented herself at the foot of the judgment seat, uttering cries as if demanding justice.

The magistrate, seeing, instead of a petition, that she held a little painting, could not refrain from expressing his astonishment.

Meï-chi, pressed to explain, exposed in the greatest detail the conduct of Ni-chen-k'i regarding her, and concluded her deposition by repeating the recommendations that the governor had given her before dying in regard to the painting held between her hands.

The magistrate took the painting and ordered her to withdraw until he had examined it with all necessary attention.

"A portrait conceals an important mystery. On the discovery of this secret depends the possession of an immense fortune. To save from indigence a young widow and her orphan son, a magistrate, endowed with divine penetration, employs all the resources of his heart and mind."

Meï-chi and her son returned home.

But let us now speak of Lord Teng. Scarcely was the audience concluded, when he retired in haste and locked himself in his room to examine the painting. He recognized that it was a family portrait representing the governor. By one hand he held a young child which he pressed against his breast. The other was pointed toward the earth.

After having reflected for part of the day, he cried: "It is evident that this personage is the governor, and that the young child is Chen-chu. In pointing with his finger at the earth, does he not seem to indicate that he desires that a magistrate should penetrate the sentiments which, in the other world, occupy his paternal heart, and become the support and protector of this tender orphan?"

"Nevertheless," said he to himself, "since there exists a will in the hand of the testator himself, this affair does not fall within my jurisdiction; the last wishes of the deceased should be observed by the law. In any case, the governor has declared that this painting conceals an important mystery; he must have had sound reasons for speaking thus. As for myself, if I do not clear up this affair, I will forever compromise my reputation."

Each day on leaving his courtroom, he took the painting; he amused himself in examining it for hours together, and exhausted himself in vain conjectures. Many days passed thus without his being able to solve the enigma which tormented him day and night.

But heaven had decided that the explanation so impatiently desired should present itself, and soon an accident sufficiently commonplace revealed the secret which had hitherto baffled every effort.

One afternoon, Lord Teng had gone out upon his terrace in order to examine this painting, and while looking at it he ordered that tea should be served. As he made a step forward to receive the cup when it was presented to him, he struck his foot against the table and upset a part of

the tea upon the painting. Laying aside the cup, he took the painting in both hands intending to hang it to the balustrade of the staircase in order that it might dry in the heat of the sun. Suddenly a ray of sunlight illumined the damp painting, the paper became transparent, and revealed between two leaves placed one above the other, several perpendicular lines which resembled writing. The magistrate was all at once enlightened. Forthwith, he separated the two leaves of paper and found, beneath the surface painting, a sheet written in the hand of the governor, and containing the following directions:

"I, who write these lines, have for five times filled high administrative positions. I am more than eighty years of age, and from day to day I am expecting to leave this life; I will leave it without regret. Chen-chu, the son of my second wife, has just attained his first birthday, and I have not yet had time to render legitimate his birth and to assure his rights. On the one hand, Chen-k'i, the son of my first wife, is altogether devoid of filial piety toward me and of attachment toward his young brother. I fear even that in time to come he may attempt his life. The two great mansions that I have recently bought and all my country estates I abandon to my elder son as a heritage, with the exception of a little hut at the left of my residence. I wish that this may descend to Chen-chu.

"Although this house is very small, it is not without worth. I have hidden there beneath the floor near the wall at the left five thousand ounces of silver contained in five earthen vases; and near the wall at the right an equal sum and a thousand pieces of gold distributed in five other vases. This total sum is equivalent to the value of the property that I have devised to Ni-chen-k'i.

"If in the future Chen-chu should meet a wise and clear-sighted magistrate who will render a decision conformable to the will which I here express, he will offer him the thousand pieces of gold as a witness of his gratitude.

"I, the old governor Ni, have written these directions with my own hand: such a year, such a month, such a day, signed with my own seal."

Now, the family portrait had been executed by the governor's order at the period in which he had just entered upon his eightieth year, and in which his young son had just completed his first twelve months.

As soon as Lord Teng had seen that there was a question here of a thousand pieces of gold, he could not refrain from feeling a secret joy in thinking that this sum would be the recompence of his cleverness and sagacity. He was, as we have seen, a witty and subtle man capable of inventing the most happy stratagems. He paused, and, knitting his brows, he collected and weighed carefully the different ideas which thronged to his mind.

His plan being soon formed, he sent privately a person to Chen-k'i to invite him to come hither. "I wish," added he, "to give him news of an affair that will interest him."

You should know that Ni-chen-k'i, who was in possession of all the wealth of his father, thought of nothing but inventing each day new pleasures and passing his life in the midst of delights such as luxury and fortune could afford him.

As soon as he perceived that the messenger bore a written order signed by the first magistrate of the city, he left at once and presented himself at the prefecture.

At that moment, Lord Teng had just come to his courtroom, where several important affairs called him. The messenger having announced to him the arrival of Ni-chen-k'i, he ordered the latter to be brought before him.

"Are you not," asked he, "the elder son of governor Ni?"

"Yes, my lord, I am."

"Meï-chi, your stepmother, has filed a complaint with me accusing you of having driven her out with her son, and of having yourself assumed all the property of the governor. What have you to say to this?"

"My young brother, Chen-chu, born of a second wife, remained with me during many years. From his earliest infancy until this day, I have reared him with the greatest care, and I have been to him as a father. During these latter days, the mother and the son have desired to leave me and to set up a separate domicile, but it is unjust to say that I have driven them forth. As for the division of the paternal estate, it is founded upon a will written in his own hand by the governor and delivered to me on the eve of his death. Your servant would never have dared disobey his last wishes."

"Where is this will in your father's hand?"

"It is at home. If you will permit me to go seek it, I will hasten to place it before you."

"The accusation states that the inheritance left by the governor amounts to ten thousand ounces of silver: that is not a small sum. Moreover, who knows if this document is really authentic? But, as you are the son of a magistrate, one should respect you. To-morrow, I will cause Meï-chi and her son to be called, and I will myself go to visit you at your home. If the division has been made unequally, justice will prevail. No special interest will be allowed to influence my decision."

Then, with a severe tone, he ordered an officer of the court to make Chen-k'i withdraw, and to conduct him home, and then to go next and warn Meï-chi and her son to the end that they might come the following day to hear the decision that they had requested.

On the way, the officer, won over by the presents of Ni-chen-k'i, forgot the mandate that he had received, and let him go in peace. As for himself, he proceeded to the hut occupied by Meï-chi and her son, and gave them the order of Lord Teng. Chen-k'i was struck by the firm and severe tone of the magistrate's summons, and withdrew trembling, in the fear that he must submit every detail of the succession to a rigorous examination. In-

deed, his father's property had not been equitably shared. He had held strictly to the letter of the will only regarding himself, and had treated his mother and his younger brother with unexampled parsimony.

In order to justify his conduct and to support it by imposing authority, he felt the need of the testimony of his relatives and friends whom he had already earlier assembled for the same object. That evening, he sent them large sums of money and invited them urgently to come to him without fail next morning, adding that if the magistrate should question them concerning the will, he would beg them to sustain him with all their power.

Now, since the death of the governor, no one among these relatives and friends had been admitted to the table of Chen-k'i; but upon receiving these packets containing ounces of silver, they could not refrain from recalling the proverb: "When all goes well, man neglects the gods and burns no incense in their honor, but, at the first danger, he becomes devout and embraces the feet of their statues."

Each one of them, laughing within himself, profited by this good fortune to make various purchases according to his fancy, resolving to examine on the morrow the turn that affairs might take and to conduct himself accordingly.

"An elder son ordinarily permits himself to be guided by his own interest, but, if he should have for stepmother a second wife, let him refrain from treating her with tryannic severity. To-day Chen-k'i buys the support of his relatives and friends at the cost of much gold. Would it not have been better for him earlier to have given a garment of silk to the young orphan?"

As soon as Meï-chi had seen the messenger and become aware of the order which he bore, she perceived that Lord Teng had recognized her complaint and was about to become her supporter. The next day she arose early and went to the prefecture to visit him.

"I am touched by your misfortunes and those of your son," he said to her with kindness; "rest assured that I will employ all my power to do you justice. But I have learned that Chen-k'i possesses a will in the governor's own hand. Tell me, I pray you, whether that document is indeed authentic."

"It is indeed true," replied Meï-chi, "that the will is written wholly in the hand of the governor, but that act is far from being the free expression of his sentiments and desires. His whole aim was to preserve his young son from certain death. You may convince yourself easily, generous magistrate, if you will examine the book which contains the schedule and deeds of all the property of the governor."

"You know the proverb," replied Lord Teng: "'For an honest magistrate it is a difficult and delicate task to divide an inheritance.' For the present, I can assure you that, during the remainder of your days, you and your son will have an abundance of all that is necessary for your subsistence. But do not conceive too great hopes."

"Lord," replied Meï-chi, "so long as my son and I are protected from hunger and cold, we will be quite satisfied. We have no ambition to equal Ni-chen-k'i, nor to rival him in luxury and opulence."

Lord Teng then prayed Meï-chi and her son to go and await him in the house of Chen-k'i.

The latter had arranged his reception hall with every comfort, and had placed there an armchair covered with a tiger's skin, and a casket exhaling the most exquisite perfumes. Without losing time, he had sent for his relatives and friends, who were joined by Meï-chi and her son. As soon as he saw them assembled, he proceeded to salute them one after another, slipping to each one some flattering words in order to engage their support.

Although Chen-k'i had his heart swollen with spite and anger, he knew how to disguise and restrain beneath a laughing exterior the feelings which agitated him. Each one prepared in advance the compliment he would address to the magistrate. They had not long to wait.

Suddenly there was heard in the distance a sound of confused voices. It was easy to understand that Lord Teng had arrived.

Chen-k'i arranged his cloak and his turban, and prepared to receive him. Those among the relatives who were the eldest and who were accustomed to good society awaited the magistrate with a grave and respectful mien. The youngest, easily frightened, stood up or went on tip-toe to the door, and allowed their gaze to travel afar, showing signs of impatience and fear.

Soon they perceived two bailiffs of the tribunal who walked behind the sedan chair and with great parasols of blue silk shaded the governor, whose prudence and intelligence were about to be so signally shown. Arrived before the house of Ni-chen-k'i, the two bailiffs kneeled and uttered a loud cry. In the twinkling of an eye, Meï-chi and all those of the house of Ni-chen-k'i fell upon their knees and remained motionless in this attitude in order to receive the magistrate.

The doorkeeper advanced; at his command the porters stopped, and set down the chair whose latticed blinds were ornamented with rich paintings.

Lord Teng, setting foot to earth, walked toward the house with grave and measured steps. Suddenly he halted, and, looking aloft, made profound salutations and articulated distinctly several responses as if he spoke to a host who had come before him. The assembly was struck with amazement, and observed his extraordinary gestures and all his movements with mute immobility. Then he advanced and, continuing his salutations, walked straight into the reception hall.

There he repeated the same ceremonies, and pronounced a long series of phrases of which no one could grasp the meaning. At first, he turned towards the arm-chair covered with tiger skin, which was placed at the

south, and made a salutation as if he saw some one seated therein. Then he turned, took another chair, and placed it at the north, where the master of the house might occupy it. He paused, looked above, and several times bowed in a respectful manner. Then he proceeded to seat himself upon the chair that had been reserved for him.

All the assembly having observed these gestures and movements, which seemed to announce that he was speaking to a god or to a soul from the other world, dared not make a step in advance. They remained ranged in two lines looking at him with a stupefied air. Suddenly, Lord Teng bowed upon his chair, and, crossing his hands upon his breast, made a profound salutation. "Your wife," cried he, "has placed in my hands a complaint relative to your inheritance! Are the facts as there set forth true?"

He spoke, and pretended to lend an attentive ear. Then, shaking his head, and as if in consternation, he cried: "What! is it possible that your elder son should be a man so wicked?"

He gathered himself together and listened again a moment.

"Where do you wish that your second son should find the means of existence?"

He stopped, and after a pause of some minutes, he added: "What resources toward living can be afforded by this little house of which you speak?" He paused.

"I obey, I obey." Again he paused.

"I will restore this heritage to your second son. Count on me. I will supervise religiously the execution of your wishes."

At these words, he made several salutations, halted an instant, and, with the air of a man who declines, he said: "It is impossible for me to accept so rich a present." Then, listening again, "Ah, well, since you command it, I obey."

So saying, he arose, and, bowing frequently with great respect, he added: "I follow you, I follow you."

All those present regarded him with stupefaction. He marched with long steps through the hall, now to the right, now to the left. Then, stopping with emotion, he cried, "Where are you going, Lord Ni?"

"I don't see Lord Ni," exclaimed the gatekeeper.

"This prodigy is nevertheless real," retorted the magistrate. Then, causing Ni-chen-k'i to draw near, he declared: "Your illustrious father has come to receive me himself; he has seated himself close to me, and has spoken to me for an hour. I believe that you all have heard our conversation."

"Not a word," replied Chen-k'i.

"I believe that I see him still," replied the magistrate, "with his tall figure, his pale and lean cheeks, his prominent cheek-bones, his piercing eyes, his long eyebrows, his large ears, his silver beard, his cap of dark

crêpe, his black shoes, his red mantle and his golden belt. Is that indeed his portrait?"

All those present began to tremble and fell upon their knees, crying, "It is indeed he! It is indeed he!"

"How could I have been so well informed," continued Lord Teng, "if I had not seen him in person? The governor has already told me that he had two great mansions, and that at the left of this in which we are is a little hovel belonging to it. Is this circumstance exact?"

Chen-k'i could not hide the truth.

"Well," said the magistrate to him, "let us visit it together. When we are there, I will have two words to say to you."

All those present, having heard Lord Teng depict with such truth the face and the costume of the governor, were persuaded that he had indeed really appeared, and remained for some time moved with fear and consternation.

But this scene was only an adroit invention, imagined by Lord Teng. As for the truth of the picture that he had drawn, and the details of the costume, they had been suggested to him by his knowledge of the painting.

"The judgment of a wise man possesses no weight in the opinion of the wicked; only the gods and the spirits can impress one who is evil. If the magistrate had not employed this ingenious stratagem, the unnatural son would never have submitted to his decision."

Ni-chen-k'i having showed the way, the magistrate followed him, together with all the assembly, and soon they arrived at the little hovel situated to the east of the house that they had just left. It was there that the governor had once lived before he had obtained any distinction. But as soon as he had been raised to high dignity in the state and there had been necessary for him a large and richly decorated mansion, he had left this modest dwelling, converted it into a storehouse, and installed there a farmer to care for the harvests placed within it.

Lord Teng, having explored this house from one end to the other halted in the central chamber and seated himself. Then, speaking to Chen-k'i, he said: "Your father has indeed appeared to me; he has described in the greatest detail all the objects contained within the house, and has charged me to see that they are given to Chen-chu. What is your wish in this matter?"

"I bend to your wise decision," replied Chen-k'i, bowing respectfully.

Lord Teng asked from him the book containing the schedule of the inheritance, examined it with careful attention, and exclaimed again and again, "What a rich inheritance! What a rich inheritance!"

Then, having cast his eyes upon the last page of the will, he said smilingly to Ni-chen-k'i, "My lord your father has explained to me only a moment ago everything that I see written here."

"That is not possible," said the other to himself, shaking his head; "the old fellow must be day-dreaming."

The magistrate, making Chen-k'i approach, showed him that, according to the text of the will, this little house and the land about it should come by right to Chen-chu.

Meï-chi, sighing, was about to throw herself at the feet of the magistrate to beg his pity, when he added, "This house, as well as all the objects that it contains, belongs in all justice to Chen-chu."

Chen-k'i made no objection. "This house," he said to himself, "contains only broken furniture of no value. It is true that there still is here a little rice and grain. But, since a month ago I sold eight-tenths of the harvest which was here, that which remains merits no attention. Wise magistrate!" cried he, "I give my full consent to your suggestion, and I shall make it my duty to execute in every point this judgment that you have rendered."

"Think well," replied the magistrate, "of the promise that you have just made; you must not later express any regrets, for there will not be time for you to change your resolve. Since these folk are your relatives, I count upon their testimony."

Then, raising his voice, he continued: "Just now, Lord Ni, whom I have seen face to face, has given me the following directions: 'At the foot of the wall at the left of the entrance, I have hidden five thousand ounces of silver, contained in five vases; I give them to my second son."

Chen-k'i could put no faith in these words. "If this be true," said he, "I declare to you that even if there were ten thousand ounces here, I would give them over without regret to my younger brother."

"If you should make any objections," replied the magistrate, "I shall know how to hold you to the execution of your promise."

At these words, he ordered the bailiffs to ask for a mattock and a spade.

Meï-chi made a sign to the farmer, who obeyed immediately, and opened the earth at the base of the eastern wall. There, in very truth, appeared five great earthen vases, filled to the top with ounces of silver. It was found, on counting the ingots contained in one of these vases, that there were a thousand, weighing together sixty-two pounds.

All those who stood by were struck with astonishment and admiration. Chen-k'i himself could but believe like the rest in the truth of the apparition. "If my father has not appeared to Lord Teng," said he to himself, "if he has not revealed these treasures, how could Teng have known of them, since I myself had no knowledge of this hidden wealth?"

The magistrate, resuming his words, spoke to Meï-chi: "At the foot of the wall at the right, there are another five thousand ounces of silver, divided among five other earthen vases; a sixth vase contains a thousand pieces of gold. Just now, Lord Ni has offered me this last sum in order to prove his gratitude. I have refused to accept the rich present; but he has urged it upon me so insistently that I have promised to obey his wishes."

Meï-chi bent to the earth, and replied to the magistrate: "The five thousands ounces before us!" cried she, "have surpassed all my expectations. If, at the base of the opposite wall, there is an equal sum of silver, we will take the liberty of not accepting it."

"How could I know aught," replied Lord Teng, "if the governor had not made me aware of these things? The fact that I have just announced to you is no fiction."

At these words, he ordered the farmer to open the earth at the base of the opposite wall, and there indeed were found five great vases filled with silver, and a sixth which contained only gold.

When Chen-k'i had perceived this enormous quantity of gold and silver, his face flushed, and his eyes sparkled with resentment. He would have liked to lay hands upon this treasure, but since he had just given his word he was careful not to make the least complaint.

Meï-chi and her son, transported with joy, thanked Lord Teng, bowing themselves before him to the earth.

Although Chen-k'i was consumed with wrath in his heart, he made an effort to control himself, and stammered some words of thanks. The magistrate took several sacks of leather and placed within them the pieces of gold that had been contained in the sixth vase and had them put within his sedan chair. All those who were present recognized that this sum had been promised him by the governor, and they felt that it was a just recompense for the services which he had rendered to the wife and the second son. What man would have refused so rich a reward? "When the sea-spider and the sea-bird called the *ni* are engaged in quarreling, the fisherman lives at their expense."

If Ni-chen-k'i had been a loyal and honest man, and if he had lived on good terms with his younger brother, he would have shared with equity all the paternal inheritance. Each of them would have had five thousand more ounces to add to his portion, and the thousand pieces of gold would not have passed into the hands of the magistrate. Then Ni-chen-k'i would have been spared many worries and would not have become the laughing-stock of the public. This example proves that those who employ ruses and artifices find others more skilful and adroit than they, and in seeking to harm these often harm themselves.

Let us speak now of Meï-chi and her son. The next morning, they bent their steps to the prefecture to thank Lord Teng. He, taking the portrait of the governor, pasted within it again the will, and restored both to Meï-chi.

From that moment, the mother and the son understood the mystery which the painting had concealed, and they recognized that in indicating the earth, the governor was pointing to the treasures there hidden.

Having become the possessors of ten vases filled with silver, they bought lands and gardens, and erected a noble mansion. Chen-chu married, and

had three sons who made rapid progress in study and acquired great reputation. This branch of the governor's family was the only one which became flourishing, and preserved the fame and illustrious character that he had bequeathed.

Chen-k'i had two sons who distinguished themselves only by their dissipation and their vices. His house decayed from day to day, and, after his death, the two large mansions that he had inherited were sold by his children to those of Chen-chu.

This story soon spread throughout the province, and all who heard its details recognized the hand of Providence which chastises the wicked and recompenses the virtuous even to their posterity.

Japan

INTRODUCTION

JAPANESE literature is said to have begun with the *Kojiki*, or *Records of Ancient Matters*, completed in the year 712 A.D. But it was not until the early part of the Tenth Century that we find the first examples of prose fiction. The word *Monogatari* usually means novel or story (though it is also applied to historical narrative), and is first used in connection with the two earliest tales in the Japanese language. These are the *Taketori Monogatari*, translated as *The Old Bamboo-Hewer's Story*, and the *Ise Monogatari*, or *Tales of Ise*. The authors and exact dates of both are unknown, though the story printed in this volume was probably the earlier of the two. There were several other tales written later in the same century, and throughout the following (the Eleventh) Century, the most famous of which is the long novel *Genji Monogatari*, or *Tale of the Genji*, by a woman who wrote under the name of Murasaki No Shikibu. The book was completed probably about the year 1000. It has been aptly described as a "prose epic of real life." The Eleventh Century was particularly rich in *Monogatari*.

The long and fertile Yedo Period (1603–1867) saw the flourishing of a more finished type of prose fiction than that of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries. Romances for the people were turned out in large quantities during the Seventeenth Century. The best-known novelist of the period was Saikaku. The writers of the Eighteenth Century offered little by way of novelty. But with the advent of Kioden (died 1816), the Japanese novel was given a new lease of life. It was he who gave his readers the "romantic novel pure and simple." Under the influence of Kioden a younger man, Bakin, began writing; he was a novelist who was to achieve international fame. The Nineteenth Century was rich in novels, tales, short stories — fiction of every sort. Modern Japanese writers are most of them working under the influence of Europe, having ceased to seek inspiration in the traditions of their own past.

THE OLD BAMBOO-HEWER'S STORY

(Anonymous: Early 10th Century, A.D.)

THE *Taketori no Okina no Monogatari* is one of the two oldest tales in Japanese literature, and probably the earlier. Nothing is known of the writer.

This is an episodic work of the fairy-tale variety, in which the writer has freely borrowed from Chinese sources.

The translation was made by F. Victor Dickins. It originally appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, January, 1887, and in book form was published by Trubner & Co., London, 1888. It is here reprinted by permission of Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London.

THE OLD BAMBOO-HEWER'S STORY

THE COMING OF THE LADY KAGUYA AND THE DAYS OF CHILDHOOD

FORMERLY there lived an old man, a bamboo-hewer, who hewed bamboos on the bosky hill-side, and manywise he wrought them to serve men's needs, and his name was Sanugi no Miyakko. Now one day, while plying the hatchet in a grove of bamboos, was he suddenly ware of a tall stem, whence streamed forth through the gloom a dazzling light. Much marvelling, he drew nigh to the reed, and saw that the glory proceeded from the heart thereof, and he looked again and beheld a tiny creature, a palm's breadth in stature and of rare loveliness, which stood midmost the splendour. Then he said to himself, "Day after day, from dawn to dusk, toil I among these bamboo-reeds, and this child that abides amidst them I may surely claim as mine own." So he put forth his hand, and took the tiny being, and carried it home, and gave it to the goodwife and her women to be nourished. And passing fair was the child, but so frail and tender that it was needful to place it in a basket to be reared. But after lighting upon this gift whilst hewing bamboos, he ceased not from his daily toil, and night after night, as he shore through the reeds and opened their internodes, came he upon one filled with grain of gold, and so, ere long, he amassed great wealth. Meanwhile the child, being duly tended, grew daily in stature, and after three months — wonderful to relate! — her stature was as that of a maiden of full years. Then her tresses were lifted and she donned the robe of maidenhood, but

still came not forth from behind the curtain. Thus cherished and watched over and tenderly reared, grew she fair of form, nor could the world show her like, and there was no gloom in any corner of the dwelling, but brightness reigned throughout, nor ever did the Ancient fall into a sorrowful mood but that his sadness was chased away when he beheld the maiden, nor was any angry word ever heard beneath that roof, and happily the days went by. Long the Ancient hewed bamboos, and gathered gold, and thus it was that he came to flourish exceedingly in the land. After this wise grew the girl to maidenhood, and the Ancient named her Mimurodo Imube no Akita, but she was more commonly called the Lady Kaguya, the Precious Slender Bamboo of the Field of Autumn. Then for three days a great feast was held, and the neighbours, one and all, menfolk and womenfolk, were invited, and they came in merry crowds and noble was the revelry.

The Wooing of the Maiden

Now the gentles dwelling in those parts, men of name and eke men of low degree, thought of nothing but how they might win this fair maiden to wife, or even gaze upon her beauty, and so distracted were they with love that they let their passion be plain to all the world. Around the fence and about the porch they lingered, but in vain, for no glimpse of the maiden could be got, nor slept they when night came but wandered out in the darkness, and made holes here and there in the fence and peered through these, but to no purpose did they strain their eyes, for never caught they sight of her on whom they longed to gaze, and thus sped their wooing from the twilight-hour of the monkey onwards. Well-nigh beside themselves were they with love and woe, but no sign was vouchsafed them, and though they essayed to gain speech of some among the household, no word of answer ever got they. So it was, yet many a noble suitor still lingered thereabouts, watching through the livelong day and through the livelong night, to catch some glimpse of the maiden; but those of low degree after a time bethought them 'twere vain to pace up and down thus bootlessly, and they departed and came no more. But there tarried five suitors, true lovers, and worthier of the name belike, in whose hearts, love died not down, and night and day they still haunted the spot. And these noble lovers were the Prince Ishizukuri and the Prince Kuramochi, the Sadaijin Dainagon Abe no Miushi and the Chiunagon Ōtomo no Miyuki, and Morotada, the Lord of Iso.

When a woman is somewhat fairer than the crowd of women, how greatly do men long to gaze upon her beauty! How much more filled with desire to behold the rare loveliness of the Lady Kaguya were these lords, who would touch no food, nor could wean their thoughts from her, and continued to pace up and down without the fence, albeit their pain

was thus in no wise eased. They indited supplications, but no answer was vouchsafed; they offered stanzas of complaint, but these too were disregarded; yet their love lessened no whit, and they affronted the ice and snow of winter and the thunderous heats of mid-summer with equal fortitude. So passed the days, and upon a certain day these lords summoned the Hewer and prayed him to bestow his daughter upon one of them, bowing before him and rubbing their palms together suppliantwise. But he said: "No child of mine by blood is the maiden, nor can she be constrained to follow my will." And the days and the months went by, and the lords returned to their mansions, but their thoughts still dwelt upon the Maiden, and many a piteous prayer they made, and many a supplication they indited, nor cared they to cease their wooing, for surely, they said to themselves, the Maiden might not remain unmated for ever. And they continued their suit, and so plainly did they manifest the strength of their passion that the Ancient was constrained to say to the Maiden, "By the grace of Buddha, through the cycle of changes hast thou come to us, daughter, and from babe to maid have we cherished thee, and I pray thee hearken to the words of an old man who loveth thee passing well."

And the Maiden answered:

"What might my father say that his daughter would not give dutiful ear to? I know not if I came to thee through the cycle of changes, but this I know, that thou art my dear father."

Then the Ancient replied:

"Right happy do thy words make me, daughter; but consider, I am an old man whose years outnumber seventy, to-day I may pass away or to-morrow, and 'tis the way of the world that the youth cleave to the maid, and the maid to the youth, for thus the world increaseth, nor otherwise are things ordered."

But Kaguya said:

"Oh father, what mean these words you utter; must it then be as you say?"

"Ay," replied the Ancient, "though strangely hast thou come to us through the cycle of changes, yet hast thou the nature of a woman, while such are thy father's years that he may not long tarry in the world to protect thee. These lords have sought thee to wife for months and years, listen, prithee, to their supplication, and let them have speech with thee, each in due turn."

Kaguya answered:

"Not so fair am I that I may be certain of a man's faith, and were I to mate with one whose heart proved fickle, what a miserable fate were mine! Noble lords, without doubt, are these of whom thou speakest, but I would not wed a man whose heart should be all untried and unknown."

And the Ancient said:

"Thou speakest my very thoughts, daughter. But, prithee, what manner of man hast thou a mind to mate with? Assuredly these lords are of noble nature and nurture."

Then she answered:

"Nay, 'tis but that I would know what the quality of these noble gentlemen's constancy may be. So like are the hearts of men that one may by no means easily part the better from the worse; go, I pray you, to these lords, and say to them, your daughter will follow him who shall prove himself the worthiest to mate with."

And the Ancient, nodding assent to her words, said: "'Tis well."

Now the night fell, and the suitors assembled and serenaded the Maiden with flute-music and with singing, with chanting to accompaniments and piping, and with cadenced tap and clap of fan, in the midst whereof came forth the Ancient, and thus spake them:

"Months and years have my lords tarried by this poor hut, and their servant presents his respectful homage and ventures to offer his humble gratitude for high favour. But many are his years, and he knows not whether he may pass away to-day or to-morrow. After this wise hath he spoken to the Maiden and prayed her to choose one among your lordships for a husband; but she would fain learn which of you be the worthiest, and him alone will she wed. Fair seemed her speech to your servant, perchance your lordships, too, will not disdain her words." And they nodded assent, saying: "It is well." Whereupon the Ancient went within and spoke with the damsel, and thus she expressed her will:

"In Tenjiku is a beggar's bowl of stone, which, of old, the Buddha himself bore, in quest whereof let Prince Ishizukuri depart and bring me the same. And on the mountain Hōrai, that towers over the Eastern ocean, grows a tree with roots of silver and trunk of gold and fruitage of pure white jade, and I bid Prince Kuramochi fare thither and break off and bring me a branch thereof. Again in the land of Morokoshi men fashion fur-robes of the pelt of the Flame-proof Rat, and I pray the Dainagon to find me one such. Then of the Chiunagon I require the rainbow-hued jewel that hides its sparkle deep in the dragon's head; and from the hands of the Lord of Iso would I fain receive the cowry-shell that the swallow brings hither over the broad sea-plain."

But the Ancient said:

"Terrible tasks these be — the things thou requirest, daughter, are not to be found within the four seas; how may one bid these noble lords depart upon like quests?"

"Nay," quoth the damsel, "these be no tasks beyond stout men's strength."

Thereupon the Ancient saw that there was nothing for it but to obey, and he went out from her, and told the suitors all that had passed, saying:

"Thus hath it been willed, and these are the tasks that must be accomplished that your worth may be known."

But the princes and the lords murmured among themselves, and said:

"'Tis, forsooth, that the Lady holds in disdain our courteous suit." So they turned and with heavy hearts fared each to his own home.

The Sacred Begging-Bowl of the Buddha

Now the days to come seemed void of pleasure to Prince Ishizukuri if never he might gaze upon the Lady's beauty, and he fell to turning over in his mind whether he might not light upon the Holy Buddha's bowl if he went up and down the land of Tenjiku in search thereof. But the Prince cared not to set out lightly on such a journey, and after much pondering over the matter he bethought himself it were after all a vain quest to fare tens of thousands of leagues on the chance of finding, in all the broad land of Tenjiku, a certain beggar's dish. Therefore, he let it be made known to the Lady that he had that very day undertaken the Quest; but towards Tenjiku he fared not a league, but hid him in Yamato, and abode there three years, at the end whereof, in a hill monastery in Tōchi, he found upon an altar of Binzuru a bowl blackened by age and begrimed with smoke, which he took and wrapped in a web of brocade. He then attached the gift to an artificial Bloom-branch, and sought again the dwelling of the Lady Kaguya, and caused the gift to be carried in to her. And as she looked upon the Bowl she marvelled greatly, and in it lay a scroll, which she opened, and a stanza was writ thereon:

Over seas, over hills
hath thy servant fared, and weary
and wayworn he perisheth:
O what tears hath cost this bowl of stone,
what floods of streaming tears!

Then the Lady looked again to see if the Bowl shone with light, but not so much as a firefly's twinkle could she discover, and she caused the bowl to be returned to the Prince, and with it was bestowed a scroll whereon was writ a verse:

Of the hanging dewdrop
not even the passing sheen
dwells herein:
On the Hill of Darkness, the Hill of Ogura,
what couldest thou hope to find?

Thereupon the Prince cast away the Bowl and made answer thuswise:

Nay, on the Hill of Brightness
what splendour
will not pale?
would that away from the light of thy beauty
the sheen of yonder Bowl might prove me true!

But no answer would the Lady make, nor give ear to any supplication and the Prince, wearied with bootless complainings, after awhile turned him sadly away and departed. And still men say of a crestfallen fellow, "hachi (haji) wo suteru."

The Jewel-Bearing Branch of Mount Hōrai

Of a wily turn was Prince Kuramochi, and he gave out to the world that he was about to take the baths in the land of Tsukushi, but to the Lady Kaguya he let it be declared that he was setting out upon the Quest after the Jewel-laden Branch. So he fared towards Naniwa with some of his squires, but not many, for he alleged him fain to travel without state, and took with him but a few of those who were in closest attendance upon their lord, and even these, after they had watched him with their eyes as he took boat, went back to Miako. Thus the Prince made folk think he had departed faring towards Tsukushi or towards Hōrai, but he tarried three days at Naniwa, and then turned him again capitalwards, being sculled up-stream. Beforehand all needful commands had been given, and six men of the Uchimaro family, the most noted craftsmen of the time, had been sought out and lodged in a dwelling aloof from the world-ways and surrounded with a triple fence, and there the Prince too retreated. Then he furnished the chief of the craftsmen with resources drawn from sixteen of his farms, the produce of which he allotted to that purpose, and caused furnaces to be erected and a jewel-laden branch to be fashioned differing no whit from that which the Lady Kaguya had bidden him go in quest of. Thus cunningly the Prince laid his scheme, and taking the branch with him set off secretly, and embarking in a boat journeyed down to Naniwa, whence he let it be made known to his squires that he had returned, and assuming the guise of one terribly worn and spent with travel, awaited their coming. And his squires and retainers came accordingly to meet him, whereupon the Prince caused the Branch to be placed in a coffer which was covered with brocade, and a clamor arose as he went through the city. "Wonderful! the Prince Kuramochi comes up to the capital, bearing with him the Udonge in bloom." But the Lady Kaguya, when these tidings reached her, said to herself, "This Prince hath surely gotten the better of me," and her heart broke within her. While thus matters stood was heard a knocking at the entrance, and presently it was announced that the Prince had presented himself and begged to be permitted to speak with the Lady, although still wearing his travelling-garb, for he had perilled his life in the quest after the Jewel-laden Branch, and had won it, and now desired to lay it at her feet. The Ancient received the message, and took the Branch and carried it within, and attached to it was a scroll whereon was written a stanza:

Though it were at the peril
of my very life,

without the Jewel-laden Branch
in my hands never again
would I have dared to return!

But the Lady looked on the Branch and was sad, and the Ancient came to her hastily, saying, "'Tis the very branch, daughter, thou desiredst the Prince to bring thee from Mount Hōrai, and he has accomplished the Quest thou badest him undertake without failing in any particular, nor mayst thou delay his guerdon; without tarrying to change his raiment, and before seeking his own mansion, has he hasted hither, nor longer canst thou refuse his suit."

But the maiden answered nothing, resting her chin mournfully on her palm, while the tears streamed in floods over her cheeks. Meanwhile the Prince, thinking that now he need dread no denial, remained waiting in the porch-way, and the Ancient resuming, said: "The like of this Jewel-laden Branch is not to be found within the four seas, thou canst not refuse the promised guerdon, nor is the Prince uncomely of person."

But the Lady answered: "Hard it is thus still to oppose my father's will, but this thing is deemed unattainable whereof I laid the quest upon the Prince, yet how easily hath he won it; a bitter grief it is to thy daughter." Then the Ancient fell to busying himself with putting the chamber in order, and after awhile went out and accosted the Prince again, saying: "Your servant would fain know what manner of place it may be where grows this tree — how wonderful a thing it is, and lovely and pleasant to see!" And the Prince answered: "The year before yesteryear, on the tenth of the second month (*Kisaragi*), we took boat at Naniwa and sculled out into the ocean, not knowing what track to follow; but I thought to myself, what would be the profit of continuing life if I might not attain the desire of my heart; so pressed we onwards, blown where the wind listed. If we perished even what mattered it, while we lived we would make what way we could over the sea-plain, and perchance thus might we somehow reach the mountain men do call Hōrai. So resolved we sculled further and further over the heaving waters, until far behind us lay the shores of our own land. And as we wandered thus, now deep in the trough of the sea we saw its very bottom, now blown by the gale we came to strange lands, where creatures like demons fell upon us and were like to have slain us. Now, knowing neither whence we had come nor whither we tended, we were almost swallowed up by the sea; now, failing of food we were driven to live upon roots; now, again, indescribably terrible beings came forth and would have devoured us; or we had to sustain our bodies by eating of the spoil of the sea. Beneath strange skies were we, and no human creature was there to give us succour; to many diseases fell we prey as we drifted along knowing not whitherwards, and so tossed we over the sea-plain, letting our boat follow the wind for five hundred days. Then, about the hour of the dragon, four hours ere noon, saw we a high hill looming faintly over the watery

waste. Long we gazed at it, and marvelled at the majesty of the mountain rising out of the sea. Lofty it was and fair of form, and doubting not it was the mountain we were seeking, our hearts were filled with awe. We plied the oar, and coasted it for two days or three, and then we saw a woman, arrayed like an angel, come forth out of the hills, bearing a silver vessel which she filled with water. So we landed and accosted her, saying: 'How call men this mountain?' and she said, ''Tis Mount Hōrai,' whereat our hearts were filled with joy. 'And you, who tell us this, who then are you?' we inquired. 'My name is Hōkanruri,' she answered, and thereupon suddenly withdrew among the hills. On scanning the mountain, we saw no man could climb its slopes, so steep were they, and we wandered about the foot thereof, where grew trees bearing blooms the world cannot show the like of. There we found a stream flowing down from the mountain, the waters whereof were rainbow-hued, yellow as gold, white as silver, blue as precious ruri; and the stream was spanned by bridges built up of divers gems, and by it grew trees laden with dazzling jewels, and from one of these I broke off the branch which I venture now to offer to the Lady Kaguya. An evil deed, I fear me, but how could I do otherwise than accomplish the object of my Quest? Delightful beyond all words is yonder mountain, in all the world there exists not its like. After I had plucked off the branch, my heart brake within me, and I hasted on board, and we sped hitherwards with a fair wind behind us, and after some four hundred days came to Naniwa, whence I departed without tarrying, so great was my desire to lay the Branch at the feet of the Lady, nor did I even change my raiment, soddened with the brine of ocean."

Moved by the piteous tale the Ancient composed a stanza:

Amid the gloomy bamboo-groves
long long have I hewed bamboos,
even upon the wild hill-sides;
but thus sad an internode
(thus sad a fortune) never have I beheld.

The Prince read the verse and said: "For these many days have I endured misery, now methinks shall I know peace," and indited a stanza in reply:

The sleeve of my garment
but this day hath become dry,
and of miseries
the countless kinds I have endured
no longer will be remembered by me.

At this juncture came six men within the fence, one after the other, and one of them carried a cleft bamboo, bearing a scroll in the cleft, and said: "The chief of the craftsmen, Ayabe no Uchimaro, humbly represents that he and his fellows for the space of a thousand days broke their hearts and

spent their strength in fashioning the Jewel-laden Branch. Yet, though long and heavy their labours, they have received no wage for their toil, and he humbly prays that they may be accorded due payment that they may have wherewithal to buy food for their wives and little ones." Then he lifted up the bamboo with the scroll in its cleft. The Ancient, with his head on one side, marvelled as he heard the words of the craftsman, but the Prince was beside himself with dismay, and felt his liver perish within him. And the Lady Kaguya, hearing of the matter, commanded that the scroll should be brought to her, whereupon it was taken within and unrolled and thus was it writ thereon: "Lately His Highness shut himself up with us mean craftsmen, and caused a jewel-laden branch of the rarest beauty to be fashioned, and promised me by way of guerdon the mastership of the craft. And after pondering over the matter, coming to know that the Branch was to be bestowed upon the Lady Kaguya, who was about to become a Lady of the Palace, I deemed it well to seek aid at the Lady's dwelling that my guerdon might be given me and the wages due be paid to us."

As the Lady Kaguya read these words, her face, which had been clouded with grief, turned radiant with joy, and she summoned the Ancient and smilingly said to him: "Ha! a veritable Branch from Hōrai this; by my faith, let his false and trickful Highness be dismissed at once and take his Jewel-laden Branch with him!"

The Ancient nodded assent, saying: "As the Branch is clearly a counterfeit, there need be no hesitation about returning it."

And with the Branch the Lady Kaguya, her heart now free of gloom, sent this stanza:

Was it the true branch of Hōrai
I asked as I gazed on thy gift:
mere leaves of sound (words)
were the jewels that adorned it,
the Branch of Bloom thou broughtest me.

So was the False Branch returned to the Prince. The Ancient remembered the lying tale wherewith he had been beguiled, and regarded His Highness with anger, who meanwhile stood still a space, not knowing whether to go or stay. But as the sun sank deeper in the west, he bethought him again, and slunk off. Now the Lady Kaguya summoned the craftsmen who had caused this pother, and praised them, giving them ample largesse, whereat they rejoiced greatly, saying, thus they knew things would be, and departed. But on their way homewards they were set upon and punished by order of the Prince, blood was shed, and all their treasure was taken from them, and thus despoiled they fled and vanished. But His Highness felt he was put to unexampled shame, and his discomfiture threw a shadow over the remainder of his days. "Not only," he

complained, "have I lost my mistress, but my name has become a reproach throughout the land." Thereupon he fled to the deepest recesses of the hills, and dwelt there all the rest of his days. Times and again the chiefs and retainers of his household sought to discover their lord's retreat, but could not, and he was as it were dead. And it was out of this history of His Highness Prince Kuramochi that arose the expression "tamazakaru."

The Flame-proof Fur-Robe

The Sadaijin Abe no Miushi was a lord of wealth and substance, and mighty withal. In the year whereof we speak, came to our country a merchant of Morokoshi, by name Wōkei, on board a ship of that land, to whom was indited a letter requiring him to buy for the Sadaijin a fur-robe, which was said to exist, made of the pelt of the Flame-proof Rat, and Ono no Fusamori, one of the trustiest of his lord's squires, was despatched in charge of the missive. So Fusamori took the letter and went down to the coast, and delivered it to Wōkei, to whom he likewise gave gold. Wōkei unrolled the scroll and read it, and made answer thus:

"The Flame-proof Fur-Robe is not to be obtained in my country; men have talked of such a robe, but it has not been seen. If it exists anywhere, it is a thing that should assuredly be brought to this land, but 'tis very hard to get by way of trade. Nevertheless, if by any hap such a robe has been carried to India, the great merchants may be able to obtain it, and should they fail, the gold now bestowed upon me shall be returned to him who brought it, to hand back to the Lord Sadaijin."

Upon the ship's return from the land of Morokoshi, the Sadaijin, having tidings that Fusamori was on board and was making ready to come up to the capital, despatched a swift horse to meet him, so that he journeyed from Tsukushi to Miako in the short space of seven days. Then a letter was delivered to the Sadaijin, who unrolled it and read these words: "The Flame-proof Fur-Robe have I finally won, after great toil and the despatch of many men in quest thereof, for difficult it is to find now, as it was of old. Long ago a venerable priest from India brought such a robe into our land, and I heard that it was preserved in a certain temple lying among the remote western hills. I besought the aid of the ruler of the district, which was accorded me, and was allowed to purchase the robe, but the money was not sufficient, and fifty riyōs of my own monies were added, which doubtless will be repaid to me ere the ship depart, or the Robe will be returned as pledge for the same." "Nay," cried the Sadaijin, "what is this talk about the gold; let the merchant have his gold without delay; welcome to me beyond words is the fruit of his quest." And turning his face towards the land of Morokoshi, he bowed him thrice, clasping his hands thankfully. Then, looking at the casket wherein the Fur-Robe was laid folded, he saw that it was beautifully adorned with inlaid work of

various kinds of precious ruri, and the Robe itself was of a glaucous colour, the hairs tipped with shining gold, a treasure indeed of incomparable loveliness, more to be admired for its pure excellence than even for its virtue in resisting the flame of fire. " 'Tis the very Robe, how pleased, methinks, the Lady Kaguya will be," cried the Sadaijin, and laid the Robe carefully in the casket which he attached to a Branch of Bloom; and putting on his fairest apparel, and feeling assured that the gift would win him his wooing, added a scroll, whereon was writ a stanza, and carried the gift to the Lady's abode.

Endless are the fires of love
that consume me, yet unconsumed
is the Robe of Fur:
dry at last are my sleeves,
for shall I not see her face this day!

Thus cheering himself, the Sadaijin reached the entrance of the Lady's dwelling, and the Ancient came out and took the casket and bore it within to the Lady Kaguya. And she gazed awhile upon the Robe and said:

" A fair robe of fur it seems to be, but till it be proved, how can we know if it be not false."

But the Ancient answered:

"However that may be, deign to invite the Sadaijin to enter; the like of yonder Robe the world doth not appear to hold; be not so distrustful, daughter, nor drive men to despair."

Then he went out and invited the Sadaijin to enter. And now the Lady, though her heart was heavy, felt she must receive him, for greatly as the Ancient had grieved over her continued maidenhood, seeking ever to find her a worthy mate, yet never had he sought to constrain her, seeing how deeply she dreaded to give herself to any man.

But she said to the Ancient: "If this Robe be thrown amid the flames and be not burnt up, I shall know it is in very truth the Flame-proof Robe, and may no longer refuse this lord's suit. As it has not its fellow in the world, and 'tis averred to be, without doubt, the famous Robe that resists flame, the proof may well be dared."

And the Ancient agreed, and told the Sadaijin it must be so, whereupon he answered: "What doubt can there be — even in the land of Morokoshi the Robe was not to be got, and could only be found after long and toilsome search; nevertheless, as the Lady will have it so, let the Robe be cast among the flames."

And a fire was kindled, and the Robe was flung therein and in a flash of flame perished utterly. So was it shown that it was not, in truth, made of the famous Flame-proof Fur. When the Sadaijin saw this, his face grew green as grass, and he stood there astonished. But the Lady Kaguya rejoiced exceedingly, and caused the casket to be returned with a scroll in it whereon was writ a verse: —

Without a vestige even left
thus to burn utterly away,
had I dreamt it of this robe of fur,
O, would I have exposed it
to so unexpected a fate!

But the Sadaijin withdrew discomfited and shut himself up in his mansion. And men, hearing that Abe had accomplished his Quest and was abiding with the Lady Kaguya, inquired at the Lady's dwelling if that were so, and were told the fate of the Robe of Fur and that he abode not with the Lady, and hearing this they exclaimed, "An *ahenashi* piece of work in truth, this fruitless job."

The Jewel in the Dragon's Head

The Dainagon Ōtomo no Miyuki, being in his mansion, assembled his household and deigned to say: "In the head of the Dragon lies a jewel, rainbow-hued, and on him who shall win it me shall nought remain unbestowed he may desire." His men listened to their lord's words, and one said humbly: "The high behests of our lord his servants hear with trembling awe; but how shall a mortal man light upon such a jewel, or draw it forth from the head of a Dragon!" Whereto the Dainagon answered: "If ye call yourselves the servants of your lord, even at the peril of your lives are ye bound to do his bidding. The jewel whereof I speak is not to be found in our land, nor yet in the land of Tenjiku, nor in that of Morokoshi; the Dragon is a monster that creeps up the hill-slopes from the sea and rushes down them into the ocean — but of what can ye be thinking in shirking this Quest?" And they said: "As our lord wills, so must it be, and albeit the task were a perilous one, we will not shirk it." Whereupon the Dainagon regarded them with a smile, and cried, "Ye would not surely put shame on your lord's name nor refuse to do his bidding."

Then he dismissed them upon the Quest after the Dragon's head gem, and that they might not want for food and support on their way, endless store of silk and cotton and coin and other things needful were bestowed upon them. And the Dainagon promised that he would live in seclusion, awaiting their return, and bade them not cast their looks homewards until they had won the jewel. So they hearkened humbly each of them and departed.

They were bidden to take the jewel from the Dragon's head, but where to turn their steps they could not tell, and they fell to reproaching their lord for being thus bewitched by a fair face. Then they divided amongst them what had been bestowed upon them, and some withdrew to their houses, there to lie hid, while others went whither they listed. 'Twas very well to be loyal to parent and prince, as the maxim runs, they muttered, but a behest so burdensome as this could not be obeyed, and bitterly they reproached their lord for having laid upon them such a task,

Meanwhile the Dainagon deeming his mansion common and mean, and unfit to receive the Lady Kaguya, caused it to be adorned throughout and made beautiful with curious lacquer-work in gold and silver, as well as with plain bright lacquer, and over the roof he ordered silken cloths of divers colours to be drawn, and every chamber to be hung with fine brocade, and the panels of the sliding partitions to be enriched with cunningly-wrought pictures, and the splendour of the mansion passed all description. And feeling sure that ere long he should obtain possession of the Lady Kaguya, he put away all the women of his household, and passed the days and the nights in solitude, and through the days and the nights awaited the return of his men; and so a year came and went, but still he heard no tidings of them. At last, weary of waiting, and sick at heart with the lack of news, he took two of his squires with him, and thus meanly served journeyed to Naniwa, and made inquiry there if any of his folk had taken boat in quest of the Dragon, to slay the monster and win the jewel that lay in his head; but the shipmen laughed and answered: "'Tis a strange thing thou speakest of; on such a business be sure no boat has left this haven." Thereupon the Dainagon said to himself: "These be but silly, feeble ship-folk, how should they know aught of this matter? Myself I will take my bow and despatch this monster, and draw the jewel from his head, nor wait longer for these laggard fellows of mine." So he took a boat, and embarked in it, and fared over sea until the land lay far behind him, and still he caused the boat to be sculled on until his keel rode on the waters of distant Tsukushi. Then without any foresign the wind rose and the air darkened, and the craft was driven hither and thither, blown about by the gale; now it seemed as though the boat must founder in the trough of the sea, now great billows threatened to topple over and overwhelm it, while the thunder-god thundered so appallingly that his monstrous drums seemed to hang close overhead. So the Dainagon lost heart, and cried aloud, saying: "Never before have I been in such perilous case, alas! what help may be invoked?" And the helmsman answered: "Long have I voyaged in these waters, yet so terrible an ill fortune as this never hath befallen me; if we sink not to the bottom of the sea, the thunder will strike us; if by good hap the favour of the gods save us from these perils, the gale will drive the boat far amid (the barbarian islands of) the southern ocean; woe worth the day I took service with my lord of evil fate, where death, belike, must be the wages!" And as he spoke the shipman burst into tears. But the Dainagon said:

"He who fares over sea must needs trust himself to the helmsman, who should be steadfast as a high hill. Why speakest thou then thus despairfully?" and as he uttered these words a terrible sickness came upon him. Then the helmsman answered: "Is your servant then a god that he can render service now? The howling of the wind and the raging of the waves and the mighty roar of the thunder are signs of the wrath of the god whom

my lord offends, who would slay the dragon of the deep, for through the dragon is the storm raised, and well it were if my lord offered a prayer."

"Thou sayest wisely," answered the Dainagon, and he fell to calling upon the god of seafolk, repenting him of his frowardness and folly who had sought to slay the Dragon, and vowing solemnly that never more would he strive to harm so much as a hair of the great ruler of the deep. A thousand times he repeated his prayer, neither standing nor sitting (but bowing him humbly before the god without ceasing). Then — was it not in answer to his prayer? — the thunder died down and the gloom lifted, but still the wind blew mightily. "'Tis the Dragon's handiwork," said the helmsman after a while, "a fair wind blows now, and drives the boat swiftly towards our own land." But the Dainagon could not understand him. For three or four days the bark sped before the wind till land came in sight, and they saw it was the strand of Akashi in Harima. Nevertheless the Dainagon would not be persuaded they had not been blown southwards on some savage shore, and lay motionless and panting in the bottom of the boat, nor would he rise, when the governor of the district, to whom his squires had sent tidings of their lord's misadventure, presented himself. But under the pine trees that overshadowed the beach mats were spread, whereupon the Dainagon saw it was on no savage shore they had drifted, and he roused himself and got on land. And when the governor saw him, he could not forbear smiling at the wretched appearance of the discomfited lord, chilled to the very bone, with swollen belly and eyes lustreless as sloes. But the proper orders were given, and a litter got ready in which the Dainagon was borne slowly to his mansion. Then those of his followers whom he had sent upon the Quest got wind somehow of their lord's return, and presented themselves humbly before him, saying: "We have failed in our quest, and have lost all claim to an audience, but now 'tis known how terribly hard was the task imposed, and hither have we ventured to come, and we trust that a gracious forbearance will be extended and that we shall not be driven out of our lords' following."

The Dainagon went out to receive them and said: "Ye have done well to return, even empty-handed. Yonder Dragon, assuredly, has kinship with the Thunder-God, and whoever shall lay hands on him to take that jewel that gleams in his head shall find himself in parlous peril. Myself am sore spent with toil and hardship, and no guerdon have I won. A thief of men's souls, and a destroyer of their bodies, is the Lady Kaguya, nor ever will I seek her abode again, nor ever bend ye your steps thitherwards."

Then the Dainagon took what was left of his substance, and divided it among those whom he had bidden go in quest of the Jewel. And when his women, whom he had dismissed, heard of his misadventure, they laughed till their sides were sore, while the silken cloths he had caused to be drawn over the roof of his mansion were carried away, thread by thread, by the crows to line their nests with. And when men asked whether the Dainagon

Ōtomo had won the Dragon-Jewel, they were answered: "Not so, but his eyeballs are become two jewels very like a pair of sloes, nor other jewels has he won." "Ana! tayegata," was the reply, and thus the expression first arose.

The Royal Hunt

Meanwhile the fame of the incomparable loveliness of the Lady Kaguya had reached the Court, and the Mikado caused one of the palace dames, Fusago by name, to be summoned, and said to her: "Of many a man has the strange beauty of the Kaguya been the ruin; go thou, therefore, and see what manner of damsel the girl be."

The Dame heard and departed, and came to the dwelling of the Bamboo-Hewer, where she was courteously received by the goodwife and invited to enter. "'Tis at the bidding of His Majesty I have journeyed hither, who has heard that the beauty of the Lady Kaguya, passes all description, and has commanded me to seek audience of her."

So spoke she and the goodwife answered, "Your servant will humbly repeat your message," and sought the inner apartment, and prayed the maiden to receive the Palace Dame. But she would not, for that she was no wise beautiful, she said. Then the goodwife chided her for her churlish speech, and inquired how she dared treat thus rudely the King's message. But the Lady Kaguya still refused to receive the Dame, saying that His Majesty showed little wisdom in despatching one of his ladies upon such an errand. Nor might the Ancient nor his goodwife constrain her, for though she filled the place of a child born to them, ever she held herself aloof from the ways of the world. So the goodwife sought again the Palace Dame, and said, "Pity 'tis, but of so tender years is our daughter she may not venture to meet a Lady of the Court." But the Dame answered, not without some anger: "The Damsel may not be excused, for His Majesty has bidden me see her, and how can I return without fulfilling the Royal behest? Will she set at nought the commands of the Ruler of the Land, and so be guilty of an unexampled folly?"

Still the Lady Kaguya willed not to give audience to the Palace Dame, saying: "I cannot yield obedience in this matter, if need be, let me be put to death."

And the Dame thereupon returned to the Palace, and made report of what had occurred.

"Verily," said His Majesty, "I can well believe 'tis a woman who revels in the destruction of men." So after a pause, thinking over the matter, the Mikado concluded that she must be constrained to yield due obedience, and caused the Ancient to be summoned to the Palace, to whom was conveyed this command. "A daughter thou hast, Kaguya by name, whom we bid thee bring to us. Fair of face and form we have heard she

is, and we sent one of our Ladies to see her, but she would not be seen. How comes it our will is thus disdainfully received in thy house?"

To which the Ancient answered humbly: "It is true the child willed not to become a Lady of the Palace, and caused your servant sore grief, but he will hasten back to his dwelling and lay your Majesty's gracious commands upon her." To which was deigned the reply: "How! has not the Ancient reared the child, and may she oppose his will? Let the Maiden be brought hither, and a hat of nobility, perchance, shall be her father's reward."

The Ancient rejoiced greatly at hearing this, and returned to his dwelling, and conveyed the Royal command to the Lady Kaguya, bidding her no longer refuse obedience. But she said: "Never will I serve His Majesty as 'tis desired; and if constraint be used towards your daughter, she will pine away and die, and the price of my father's hat of nobility will be the destruction of his child."

"Nay, die thou shalt not," cried the Ancient; "what were a hat of nobility to me if never again I beheld thee? Yet, daughter, I pray thee, tell thy father why thou refusest to become a Lady of the Palace and why shouldest thou die if thou shouldest serve his Majesty?"

"Empty words seem thy daughter's," answered the Damsel, "but true will they prove if she be constrained to do this thing. Many a suitor has wooed her, lords of no mean estate, who nevertheless have been dismissed, and should she listen to his Majesty, her name would become a reproach among men."

Then the Ancient answered: "Little care I for matters of state, but thy days must know no peril, nor shalt thou be in any wise constrained, and I will hasten to the palace and humbly represent to His Majesty that thou mayest not become an inmate thereof.

Thereupon he went up to the Capital, and represented that the Lady Kaguya, after hearing the Royal Command, nevertheless willed not to become a Lady of the Palace, and might not be constrained without peril of her life; and further, that she was not the born child of Miyakko Maro, but had been found by him one day when hewing bamboos on the hillside, and that she was in ways and moods of other fashion than the fashion of this world. Upon this being reported to his Majesty, he said: "Dwells not this Miyakko Maro among the hills hard by our capital? Let a Royal Hunt be ordered, and, perchance, thus we may gain a glimpse of the Maiden."

The Ancient, when the Royal pleasure was made known to him, said: "'Tis an excellent device; thus may his Majesty, without difficulty, on the Hunt being unexpectedly ordered, gain a glimpse of the Lady Kaguya ere a thought of it enters her heart."

So a day was appointed, and the Royal Hunt ordered, and the Mikado watched for an opportunity and entered the Bamboo-Hewer's dwelling.

And as the threshold was crossed, it was seen that the house was filled with light, and midmost the glory stood a Being. "Ha! 'tis the Lady," cried the Mikado, and drew nigh, but she made to fly, and a royal hand was laid upon her sleeve, and she covered her face, but not with such swiftness that a glimpse of it was not caught, and the loveliness of it was seen to be incomparable. And His Majesty would fain have led her forth, but she stood there and spoke these words: "No liege of your Majesty is his servant, and she may not therefore be thus led away." But it was answered that she must not resist the Royal Will, and a palace litter approached, whereupon of a sudden the Lady dissolved in thin air and vanished. The monarch stood dumb with astonishment, and understood that the Lady was of no mortal mould, and said: "It shall be as thou desirest, Maiden; but 'tis prayed that thou resume thy form, that once more thy beauty may be seen."

So she resumed her form and the glory of her loveliness filled the Royal heart with overwhelming delight; and graciously was the Ancient remembered, through whom this joy had come to His Majesty, and upon him was bestowed the rank of Chief of the Hiyak'kwan.

But great was the grief that the Lady willed not to dwell in the Palace, and as the Monarch was about to be borne away, it seemed as if the Royal soul was being left behind, and a stanza was composed whereof the words were these:

Mournful the return
of the Royal Hunt,
and full of sorrow the brooding heart,
for she resists and stays behind,
the Lady Kaguya!

And the Lady answered thuswise: —

Under the roof o'ergrown with hopbine
long were the years
she passed,
how may she dare to look upon
the Palace of Precious Jade?

When the answer was read, more than ever was the Monarch disinclined to go back bootless to the Palace, and long the litter was delayed, for no resolve could be come to, until it seemed at last as though the dawn would be there waited for through the night; whereupon reluctantly was the order given to return. But the Ladies of the Court were disdained, for their beauty paled before that of the Lady Kaguya, aye the fairest of them, when compared with her image, lost all her charms. Only on the Lady could the Royal heart dwell, and on none other, and the apartments of the Palace Dames were abandoned and desolate, sad to say! while letter after letter was sent to the Lady Kaguya, who answered them not ungently,

and verses were composed and fairly writ on scrolls attached to posies, and interchanged, and thus the days passed by.

The Celestial Robe of Feathers

So in the Palace and in the Hut was consolation attained; and three years went by, when, in the early spring, the Lady Kaguya fell to gazing upon the shining orb of the rising moon, and a brooding sadness seemed to take possession of her. She was counselled not thus ceaselessly to contemplate the face of the moon, for so was bred mournfulness; but she still in solitude watched the orb, until tears of grief ran down her cheeks in floods. Then, on the mid-month day of the seventh month rose the full moon, and unutterable grew the misery, and the maidens who served the Lady sought the Ancient and said: "Long has the Lady Kaguya watched the moon, waxing in melancholy with the waxing thereof, and her woe now passes all measure, and sorely she weeps and wails; wherefore we counsel thee to speak with her."

And the Ancient went to her and said: "What hast thou on thy mind, daughter, that ever thou gazest thus sadly on yonder moon's pallid face? Lackest thou aught that may be needed for thy happiness?"

But she answered: "As I gaze upon the moon I am sad because my heart is broken as I consider the wretchedness of this world."

And deeper grew her melancholy each time the Ancient visited her chamber, till sorrow-struck by her distress, he said: "Ah! my darling, my Buddha, why broodest thou thus? what grief oppresses thee?"

"'Tis no grief, save the grief that breaks my heart because of the wretchedness of the world."

"Watch yonder moon no more, daughter; ever art thou gazing upon it, and thus thy woe deepens."

"How may I cease, father, to gaze upon the orb!" said the Lady, and still she watched the moon from its rising to its setting, her face wet with tears the while; but when the nights were moonless, her woe departed from her. Yet as the new moon came and waxed again, the Lady wailed and wept, and her women whispered among themselves that ever deeper grew the misery; but they could not learn the secret of her woe, neither could the Ancient. So the eighth month came in due course, and when the moon was at its full the Lady wept floods of tears, nor essayed she to hide her grief. And again and again her foster-parents prayed her to tell them the cause of her wretchedness. The Lady yielded to their prayer, and said, weeping sorely the while: "Again and again have I willed to tell you all, but I felt assured your hearts would be wrung with grief by my words, and therefore have I forborne till now; and now is the hour come I may no longer abide with you. No maid of this mortal land am I, but the Capital of Moonland is my birth-place. Long ago it was decreed that I should

descend upon this earth, and bide there somewhile; but now is the time at hand when I must go back whence I came, for when yonder orb shall be at its fullest, a company of moonfolk will come down from the sky to bear me away. Well I knew this was my doom, and now ye can understand my misery and wherefore I have wept and wailed so sorely since the spring followed winter."

And as the Lady spoke, again the tears flowed in abundance down her cheeks. But the Ancient said: "What thing is this thou speakest, daughter? I found thee, 'tis true, in the hollow of a bamboo, but no bigger wert thou than a rapeseed, and have we not cherished thee while thou grewest up to full maidenhood? None dare take thee from us, by heaven! I will not let thee go."

And he clamoured, amid his tears, that he was like to die; unbearably piteous 'twas to see his misery. But the Lady answered: "My father and my mother are still numbered among the dwellers in yonder Moonland's capital. It was but for a while I came down to earth, and now many a year has gone by since you found me. So long have I dwelt among you that I have forgotten my father and my mother, and now I look upon you as though I were your very child; nor indeed would I fain do otherwise than remain with you, but, though terrible to me is the thought of quitting you, I may not flee my fate." And she fell to weeping, and the old folk wept also, and her women who had tended her through so many years and watched her grow up into perfect beauty, now hearing they must lose her whom they loved so well, could not swallow their tears, and, oppressed by a like woe, were consumed with grief.

Now the Mikado, hearing of these things, sent a messenger to the Hewer's dwelling, and the Ancient came out to receive him weeping abundantly. So bitter had been his grief that his hair had turned white, and his limbs become bowed, and his eyes blear, and though his years were but fifty, he seemed as if his woe had all at once turned him into an old man.

The messenger inquired if the tidings which had reached His Majesty as to the Hewer's distress were true, and the Ancient, still weeping, answered:

"At the full moon a company from the Moonland capital will come down to bear away our daughter. Deeply grateful am I to His Majesty, who deigns to make inquiry about this matter, and I humbly represent that if at the time of full moon a guard of soldiers be granted us, these Moonfolk, if they make their raid, may all be captured."

The messenger thereupon returned, and reported to the Mikado the plight wherein he found the Ancient.

And the Mikado said: "But a passing glimpse have I had of the Lady Kaguya, yet never shall I lose the memory of her exceeding loveliness; how hard then must it be for those who are wont to see her morning and

evening to lose her!" So orders were given that the captains should be ready by the full moon, and the General Taka no Ōkuni was commanded to take a thousand men from each of the Left and Right Regiments of Royal Guards to protect the Hewer's dwelling against the raid of the Moonfolk. When the two thousand soldiers reached the Ancient's abode, one moiety was posted around it on the earth platform whereon it stood, and the other moiety on the roof of the house, all with bow bent and arrow on string, while the men of the household too were arrayed, and so many were the defenders that no spot remained unguarded, and even within the dwelling the women kept watch and ward, while the Lady was placed in the store-house, surrounded by her attendents, the door whereof the Ancient bolted, and posted himself outside thereof, saying: "Watch and ward thus strict, even Heavenfolk may not win through," and crying to the soldiers on the roof to look out for the first sign of a swoop being made through the air, and slay whatever creature might in this way approach them, whereto they answered: "Have no care, so keen our watch not even a bat shall escape our artillery, and due exposure of its head, by way of punishment, should it venture near our ranks."

And the Ancient was greatly comforted by these words, but the Lady Kaguya said: "Though ye thus surround me and protect me and make ye ready to fight for me, yet ye cannot prevail over the folk of yonder land, nor will your artillery harm them nor your defences avail aught against them, for every door will fly open at their approach, nor may your valour help, for be ye never so stout-hearted, when the Moonfolk come, vain will be your struggle with them."

Then the Ancient was angered, and shouted: "If these Moonfolk come, my nails shall turn into talons to claw out their eyes. I will seize them by their forelocks and twist them off, and trample upon them; their hinder-parts will I tear to pieces; to shame will I put them before the face of these Royal warmen."

But the Lady said: "Make not so great a clamour, lest the warmen hear thee, which were unseemly. Ere long, alas! I shall no longer be within your love, ere long I must know the bitterness of parting, nor can I ever return to show my love and gratitude, for closed to me will be the world's ways. When I went out month after month to watch the waxing moon, I prayed for yet another year to bide with you; but the boon was refused me, and I could but wail and weep as ye saw me. I have beguiled your hearts to love me, and now must quit you; alas, alas! Of that pure essence are these Moonfolk that they know not old age nor ever suffer from any pain or grief, yet fain would I abide with my foster-parents; terrible it is to me to think that ye will grow old with no child to cherish you." So saying, the Lady wept sorely, but the Ancient, restraining his grief, said:

"Nay, daughter, thou must not anger beings so lovely as those thou speakest of."

Meanwhile, the night wore away, and, at the hour of the Rat, behold! a glory fell about the dwelling that exceeded the splendour of noon and was ten times as bright as the brightness of the full moon, so that the smallest hair-pore could be seen on the skin. In the midst thereof came down through the air a company of angels riding on a coil of cloud that descended until it hovered some cubits' height above the ground. And there the angels stood ranked in due order; and when the warmen on guard saw them, a great fear fell upon them, upon those without as upon those within the dwelling, and they had no stomach for fighting. But after a while they rallied; and some bent the bow, but the strength departed from their arms, and they were as though stricken with palsy; and mightier men let fly anon, but the shafts went all astray, and these too could not fight, and thus feeble and bootless proved the vaunted watch and ward of the Royal Warmen.

In shining garments were the angels clad, that had not their like under heaven, and in the midst of them, as they stood in serried ranks upon the cloud, was seen a canopied car hung with curtains of finest woollen fabric, where sat One who seemed to be their lord. And the Archangel turned towards the Hewer's abode, and cried out in a loud voice, "Come thou forth, Miyakko Maro." And the Hewer came forth, staggering like a drunken man, and fell on his face prostrate.

Then the Archangel said, "Thou fool! Some small virtue didst thou display in thy life, and to reward thee was this maiden sent to bide with thee somewhile, and years and years hath she dwelt under thy ward, and heaps and heaps of gold have been bestowed upon thee, and thou hast as it were become a new man. To expiate a fault she had committed was the Lady Kaguya doomed to bide a little while in thy wretched home, and now is the doom fulfilled, and we are come to bear her away from thine earth. Vain is thy weeping and lamentation, render up the girl and delay not."

Then the Ancient answered humbly, "For over a score of years thy servant has cherished the maiden, whereof his lord speaks strangely as being but a little while. Perchance the Lady whom his lord would bear away with him dwells elsewhere; the Lady Kaguya who bides beneath this roof is very sick and may not leave her chamber."

No answer was vouchsafed, but the Car was borne upwards on the cloud till it hovered over the houseroof and a voice cried, "Ho there, Kaguya! how long wouldest thou tarry in this sorry place?"

Thereupon the outer door of the storehouse, wherein stood the Lady Kaguya, flew open and the inner lattice-work, untouched by any hand, slid back and the Lady was seen in the light of the doorway, surrounded by her women, who, understanding that her departure could no longer be stayed, lifted up their hands and wept. But the Lady passed out, and drew nigh to where lay the Hewer, grovelling on the ground, weeping and

stunned with grief, and said: "My fate bids me, father; will you not follow me with your eyes as I am borne away?"

But the Hewer answered: "Why in my misery should I follow thee with my eyes? Let it be done unto me as may be listed, let me be left desolate, let these angels who have come down from the sky to fetch thee bear thee thither with them." And the Ancient refused to be comforted. Then the Lady indited a scroll, seeing that her foster-father was too overcome with grief to listen to her words, and left it to be given him after she had gone, weeping sorely and saying that when her father should yearn after his daughter, the words she had written should be read. And these were the words she wrote: "Had I been born in this land, never should I have quitted it until the time came for my father to suffer no sorrow for his child; but now, on the contrary, must I pass beyond the boundaries of this world, though sorely against my will. My silken mantle I leave behind me as a memorial, and when the moon lights up the night, let my father gaze upon it; now my eyes must take their last look, and I must mount to yonder sky, whence I fain would fall meteor-wise to earth."

Now the Angels brought with them a coffer, wherein were contained a Celestial Feather Robe and a joint of bamboo filled with the Elixir of life, and one of them said to the Lady Kaguya: "Taste, I pray you, of this Elixir, for soiled has your spirit become with the grossnesses of this filthy world."

Then the Lady tasted of the Elixir, and would have privily wrapt up a portion in the mantle she was leaving behind, as a memorial of her; but an Angel stayed her, and drawing forth the Celestial Robe, made ready to throw it over her shoulders, whereupon she said: "Have patience yet awhile; who dons yonder robe changes his heart, and I have still somewhat to say ere I depart." And again she fell to writing, and an Angel said: "'Tis late, and you delay, Lady, overmuch." But she rebuked him, and before all, mournfully and composedly, she wrote on; and the words she wrote were these:

"Your Majesty deigned to send a host to protect your servant, but it was not to be, and now is the misery at hand of departing with those who have come to bear her away with them. Not permitted was it to her to serve your Majesty, and maugre her will was it that she yielded not obedience to the Royal Command, and wrung with grief is her heart thereat, and perchance your Majesty may have thought the Royal will was not understood, and was opposed by her, and so will she appear to your Majesty lacking in good manners, which she would not your Majesty deemed her to be, and therefore humbly she lays this writing at the Royal Feet. And now must she don the Feather Robe and mournfully bid her lord farewell." Then when she had finished writing the scroll, the captain of the host was called, and it was delivered over, together with the bamboo joint containing the Elixir, into his hands, and as he took it, the

Feather Robe was thrown over the Lady Kaguya, and in a trice, all memory of her foster-father's woe vanished, for those who don yonder Robe know sorrow no more. Then the Lady entered the car, surrounded by the company of Angels, and mounted skywards, while the Hewer and his Dame and the women who had served the Lady shed tears of blood, and stood stunned with grief; but there was no help. And the scroll left for the Ancient was read to him, but he said:

"What have I to live for? a bitter old age is mine. Of what profit is my life? whom have I to love?" Nor would he take the Elixir, but lay prostrate on the ground and would not rise.

Meanwhile the Captain of the host returned to the capital with his men, and reported how vain had been the attempt to stay the departure of the Lady Kaguya, and all that had occurred, and gave the scroll, together with the bamboo joint containing the Elixir, to be laid before the Mikado. And His Majesty unrolled the scroll and read it, and was greatly moved, nor would take food nor any diversion. After a while a Grand Council was summoned, and it was inquired which among the mountains of the land towered highest towards heaven. And one said: "In Suruga stands a mountain, not remote from the capital, that towers highest towards heaven among all the mountains of the land." Whereof His Majesty being informed composed a stanza:

Never more to see her!
Tears of grief overwhelm me,
and as for me,
with the Elixir of Life
what have I to do?

And the scroll together with the Elixir was given into the hands of one of the ladies of the palace, and she was charged to deliver them to one Tsuki no Iwakasa, with the injunction to bear them to the summit of the highest mountain in Suruga, that there, standing on the top of the highest peak thereof, he should cause the scroll and the Elixir to be consumed with fire.

So Tsuki no Iwakasa heard humbly the Royal Command, and took with him a company of warriors, and climbed the mountain and did as he had been bidden. And it was from that time forth that the name of Fuji was given to yonder mountain, and men say that the smoke of that burning still curls from its high peak to mingle with the clouds of Heaven.

Finland

INTRODUCTION

FINNISH is one of the three related languages used by the Finns, the Esthonians, and the Hungarians. Although from the earliest days of the Christian era a vast fund of folk-songs, legends, and ballads has been evolved by the Finnish people, there was no clearly-defined or formal literature until toward the middle of the Nineteenth Century, when the famous "synthetic" epic, the *Kalevala*, was constructed or assembled out of the popular legends of the country. This was in 1835. With the appearance of this monument of national literature, and the political separation of the Finns from the Swedes, came a decided impulse toward nationalism. Among the founders of modern Finnish literature were Oksanen, Suondo, and Kivi. These writers, like nearly all who succeeded them, were popular authors: they were concerned largely with the lives and ideas of peasants in the rural communities they knew best.

One of the earliest Finnish writers of tales was Pietari Paivarinta (born 1827). But it is in the work of Juhani Aho that Finland found one of her most powerful and inspired interpreters. In his novels, tales, and poems, he revealed the life and customs of his people with rare charm. Santeri Ingman, one of his contemporaries, and Pakkala, Kilpi, and Maila Talvio, his successors, have likewise taken it upon themselves to create a genuine popular Finnish literature.

JUHANI AHO

(1861–)

Juhani Aho is one of the most important and imposing figures in modern Finnish literature. The greater part of his life has been dedicated to the writing of novels and stories of his people.

Outlawed is one of his best short novels. It is a particularly skilful example of what a novelist can do within the framework of the short novel form.

The story appears in this volume for the first time in an English translation. It was especially translated by Professor Edwin H. Zeydel.

OUTLAWED

"SEE here! I want you to let Junnu alone," cried the master from the other side of the field, directly across the uncut rye.

"Well, we would, if he'd only keep away from us," grumbled the others, as they went on reaping with all their might.

But soon the taunting began again.

Everybody on the farm was in a conspiracy against one lone man. He was a tall, heavy-set, dark-skinned laborer who, without once bending his back, kept cutting his way forward like a whirlwind, always a few paces ahead of the others, utterly ignoring all their taunts. But they were eager to make him furious. They wanted to get him to the point where he would hurl some heavy object at them to give vent to his wrath, as he always did when provoked. In this way they once drove him to seize a tobacco-knife and fling it against the wall. After such a fit of temper he usually retired without uttering a word all day to any one. And when he could find nothing to throw in order to keep them away from him, they treated him like a dummy, and incited the little boys to tease him.

The master was his only protector, for Junnu was a capable worker, reliable in all ways, and good to the horses. Sometimes he helped the girls, too, in feeding the cattle.

Now the fun had begun once more during the noon recess at the edge of the field. Junnu was busy eating his lunch and had laid his hat, pipe and tobacco pouch down on a knoll. Except when he ate, he never parted with them. When he had finished and looked about for these companions he found his hat cocked on a tree stump and his pipe stuck into a crevice

next to it. It looked as if the stump were smoking. This aroused general hilarity, even the master could not refrain from laughing good-naturedly.

Without a word Junnu took his hat and pipe and asked for his pouch.

"Why ask us? Ask the stump!" was the answer, and the laughter grew more boisterous.

The teasing got a new impetus when Tafvo, the laborer, pulled at the pouch, which was pinned to Junnu's own belt in such a way that it dangled on his seat. He could not control himself any longer, and swiftly swung his fist at Tafvo. But Tafvo side-stepped and Junnu bruised his bony fingers against a spruce tree. He panted hard, and his nostrils dilated. But he took his scythe and went to work, some distance away from the others.

"He eats so greedily you could tear his wig from his head without his noticing it," some one behind him remarked.

"Yes, they took that away from him once," drawled Tafvo.

"How was that?" asked another.

"Oh, that was the time he sat behind the heavy walls of Kuopio as a guest of the state."

"You hold your tongue!" commanded the master, driving the people back to work.

But the talk continued.

"What kind deed did he do that won him the invitation of the state?"

"He stole a milk pail. Carried it away from a farmer's hut into the woods and gave it to the other robbers."

"Who told you that?"

"He himself."

"Shut your mouth, you long-legged cur!" Junnu suddenly cried, to the astonishment of all.

"Shut your own mouth, — you wolf's-back."

Junnu had a long back and short legs, and they always called him that.

"Yes, this back took so many cracks of the whip, that the whipper thought he'd never finish his job. 'Shall we begin all over again?' he asked the magistrate, and then Junnu got two rations of whacks for good measure, in addition to a jail sentence. But he didn't make a sound in spite of it."

"Lord knows, he might not even have surrendered to a Cossack's whip."

"Well, I don't know. Suppose it had happened that his own father had used one on him?"

Junnu was illegitimate; this fact had given rise to the malicious rumor that his father was a Russian Cossack who used to live in the village.

"Be quiet now, won't you?" called the master sternly.

"Jesus protect us!" the women cried at the same moment in great consternation, and a wild curse came in unison from the men.

For Junnu had picked up a gigantic rock, lifted it as if it were a strip of birch-bark, and tossed it in the midst of the reapers with a terrible curse, and a face distorted by rage.

The others managed to dodge the stone, but Tafvo stumbled, and the stone struck him on the foot.

"He's killing me, he's killing me!" he bellowed.

"Nonsense! Be sensible, he hasn't hurt your leg at all," said the master, as he examined Tafvo's foot.

"The brute! Tie him, hold him before he gets away from us."

The men dashed straight through the rye toward Junnu. They came to blows with him, but he shook them off with a wild gesture.

"Now let Junnu alone and don't trample down the rye. Away there, and back to work."

"Is our master defending that maniac, who doesn't even care what he hurls? It wasn't his fault he missed my head."

"Then it would have been your own fault. Didn't I warn you?"

"I'll make him pay damages for this — if I have to go to court," growled Tafvo, limping back to his scythe.

"You fellows may quarrel about that as much as you like. There's a limit to taunting," said the master as he turned and left them.

But he shuddered involuntarily as he saw the stone, half buried in the ground. It was so heavy he could scarcely budge it. It was after all providential that it did not do greater damage.

In Junnu's eyes everything trembled in red and yellow streaks, and field and forest danced about. The overexertion had suddenly made him feel sick; he felt so weak he could hardly stand. He sat down a little; his head felt dull. Then he rose and made directly for the forest. Onward he went, without knowing whither. Onward without remembering why. Only after a long walk, when he had reached a fence and vaulted over it, did he realize that he had been on the point of killing a man, and that in throwing the stone he really had had no such intention.

The reapers came home from the field, bathed and had eaten supper. Afterward they had gone to their huts for the night. Only the master was still awake. He was putting his boots up on the top-beam to dry, when Junnu came into the room and sat down on the bench by the wall without saying a word.

"Do you want another bite to eat?" inquired the master; but Junnu was not hungry.

"I'd like to have a word with the master," he said finally, as he noticed that the farmer was barring the doors.

"Well, what have you on your mind that's so important, Junnu?"

"Dismiss me!"

"But what does this mean, Junnu? Now — in midseason? And why?"

"Nothing good will come of my staying in this house."

"Why worry about that stupid, malicious talk? We always used to be able to settle such quarrels."

"Yes, maybe — as far as you were concerned. But I have no peace — and I might easily cause some misfortune."

"Don't you think you ought to try to control your temper a little? Isn't it cruel to use such weapons in a fight?"

"I can't control myself when they keep scoffing at me; I get raging angry — and it goes to my head."

The master stood for a while lost in thought, then sat down on the bench by the table.

"If you and Tafvo can't get along, I'll let him go."

"No, I couldn't stand the looks and remarks of the others anyhow. Of course they hate me — like all honest people."

"What's the use of such talk? You're no worse than any of the rest."

"But, master, you yourself heard what they said."

"Oh, that's just slander, pure and simple!"

"What they said's true enough."

"You haven't been in jail for stealing, have you?"

"Yes, I have. I haven't told it to any one else but Tafvo — that was last winter, up in the hay loft, when he pretended to be my friend. And now I'll tell it to you because you've always been kind to me."

"Certainly, tell me about it if you like."

"Yes I'll tell you," Junnu began, with a break in his voice, panting as though to choke down his tears. "It was this way. They caught me, the beggar boy, in their net and pushed me through the window — they couldn't get in — and made me steal a milk-pail and three loaves of bread, and a butter vat. But I knew them, and I reported them. I never did anything worse. I always lived on my own earnings. But they're all down on me — here as well as at home. Dogs will be dogs. They're the same all over the world."

"But you can't get away from this world."

"I could get out of the way, if you'd help me, Master. I'd ask no wages if you'd only let me have a little piece of land up on the hill."

"A piece of land! And where would that be?"

"I was thinking of a piece up near the waste-lands in the Kontio Forest."

The master made no reply, so Junnu continued:

"I've even picked out a spot — on the shore of Lake Musti . . . and you could fix the rent, Master — any price you wish."

The master could think of no valid objection to letting one of his own laborers live on his land. Indeed, the more he thought about it, the more desirable it seemed to have a man over there near the Forest on the shore of Lake Musti. He was not quite sure, but it seemed at least probable that — he had read about it in the papers! If the fellow insisted on going, why, there was no objection.

"Oh, we can easily agree on the rent," he said, adding: "I shall consider the matter."

"I'd like nothing better than to move out there to-morrow morning. If necessary, I'll furnish a laborer to take my place here."

The master reflected a while longer, and then said as he got up: "Well, I suppose we'll have to give in to you. About the terms we can come to an agreement later." And with that he went out.

Junnu remained seated in the poorly lighted room.

For a long time this thought had been going round in his head. The longer he lived, the less able he was to endure the scorn and heartlessness of his fellows. The feeling that they were all conspiring against him grew more oppressive with the years. He had begun to be distrustful of everything in human nature, of words as well as deeds. He had the notion that every one was pointing a finger at him, wherever he went — at home or in the village. He had tried to win men by kindness, good words and helpfulness. But they had all made a fool of him, like Tafvo, to whom Junnu had confided the story of his life. After the men had smoked the tobacco he had brought from town, and the women had eaten the candy he had bought, and drunk the coffee he had cooked, they were always ready once more to laugh at his appearance and to ridicule his awkwardness and stupidity. And all this merely to drive him into a boundless rage, so that he might commit a deed which would get him into trouble and send him to prison once more. They all coveted possession of his modest savings, which they knew he had earned by floating logs down the river.

All of them had tried to cheat him, all were continually at his throat. And foremost among them were his superiors.

"If you confess you will get off easier," the magistrate had told him that time in court. But it was a lie. When he confessed he was sentenced to the whipping-post. Had his hands been free, he would have choked the man on the bench.

Yes, it was so, what the other prisoners had said, that the poor fellow would never get justice in this world, whatever might be in store for him in heaven. All those distinguished gentlemen of the state had feathered their nests, and the farmers were only their tools and slaves — a motley crowd without much standing in the community!

It was the parson who had softened his heart that time. He said, and repeated it, that anyone who had had sentence passed on him and had paid his penalty honestly was just as good as all the others, who had no right to torture and torment him. He was free to serve as godfather, or even as a witness in court. But that too was a lie. After his release from prison people proceeded to make life still more intolerable for him than ever. Of course it might be true, as the parson had assured him, that if he were not made for men, he *was* made for God. But he did not understand that, and he could not reason it out. Every time he tried, his head began to buzz, and his mind was a blank; he understood nothing.

But this much was now clear to him: he had to get away, away from everything, away for all time. He wanted to escape into the wilderness and hide like a bear in his den. Then he would see if those swine would dare come and pick a quarrel with him.

Impulsively he rose and went out. He would not stay one night more. He got his things from his bunk, put a loaf of bread into his birch bark pouch, and slunk away without being noticed.

He soon left the road and took a footpath that led off to one side.

He followed the fence of the horse pasture, where his namesake — a bay stallion — was pasturing. He had always tended him with loving care, and now the horse neighed softly as he approached. He stopped a moment, stroked him gently, talked to him and tinkled his bell. The horse had been his one friend, the only one that had not spoken an offensive word, in whose eyes he had never seen ill-concealed scorn.

It was a Sunday morning that Junnu moved out to his solitary home. While all the others were at church he had been to see the master without anyone's having noticed it. With his savings he had bought the bay horse, and a verbal agreement was made that if Junnu wished to continue living as a hermit, he should have the right to cultivate the land for ten years on the sole condition that he must pay for his part of the seed. In addition, the master stipulated that if Junnu should decide to come back and live among his fellows, all the buildings on the strip should belong to the farm.

"Come back and live among my fellows after I have once gotten away from them!" Junnu chuckled to himself as he led his horse by the rein — he had not the heart to mount — and went on deeper and deeper into the woods.

How stupid of him not to have realized this dream long ago! But how could he have known that there was one man in this world who was not intent on brushing him aside or making sport of him? To think that he had given up the land for ten years without rent, without making petty conditions and demands! Yes, he would be grateful to this man, ten times over! Of his own free will he would bring him all the produce of the soil he did not need for himself. At the thought of such kindness his heart softened, his chin quivered, and with his rugged hand he had wiped a tear from the corner of his eye.

Swiftly he walked on along the wild, overgrown trails that stretched unbroken past the swamps next to the forest, where scarcely another human foot had ever trodden. He climbed to the top of a high rocky cliff, where he saw nothing but an endless expanse of woods changing to autumn colors, and sleepy swamps lurking behind every thicket.

The world of men is far away, wherever the eye may roam. Behind yonder hills not a sound is heard, and no trace of smoke curls up to give evi-

dence of human habitation. Only from time to time the barking of a hunter's dog can be heard in the distance, or the dull echo of a rifle-shot. But the hunters go their own way. They do not come to disturb his solitude.

As he continued his journey his cautiousness prompted him to pick a handful of moss and muffle the horse's bell with it.

Not even at home in his hut did his soul find peace. For weeks he was tormented by the uneasy fear that "the world" might perchance discover him, even in this hiding-place, that the scoffers might seek him out and come in crowds to haunt him and drive him away. Perhaps Tafvo might make good his threat, and tell the judge about the attempted manslaughter?

All through the autumn months such thoughts worried him.

His hut stood in a valley on the shore of the Lake directly between two steep hills. Near the place he had chosen, there had for many years stood a refuge hut, half dug into the earth, built to give shelter for the night to the charcoal-burners. He had patched its roof and occupied it as a dwelling until his own hut was finished. Later he intended to use it as a stable for his horse.

Even while he was at work making beams and shingles, he seemed to hear plainly the steps of men in the underbrush, to spy someone moving among the trees. He stopped hammering and watched like an escaped convict, motionless and with bated breath, for his pursuers. On Sundays, especially, he feared visitors, and to make doubly sure he left early in the morning for the woods with his nets and snares. And when he returned late in the evening it was like a thief, pausing again and again, intently listening.

But no one came. By the time the snow began to fall, Junnu had a roof over his cabin. On the evening of All-Saints-Day he built his first fire in the new stove.

The flames flickered on the hearth, the burning wood crackled joyfully, and the smoke climbed the walls. Junnu reclined at full length on the bench, pulling at his pipe and gazing at the smoke.

Now he had a roof over his head, and his own walls to protect him. At last he had a place of his own from which he had the right to eject anyone who might come to disturb him. No longer did he have to bow before people or humor them.

If only his old mother were still alive, he could take her into the house with him. This thought suddenly flashed upon him. For a score of years or more he had completely forgotten her. She had been a sort of outcast, and had never known a home of her own. She had died, infamously scourged and persecuted, trodden down by mankind. She was buried during the great famine in a rough-hewn coffin, together with a number of others. Hardly a church bell pealed as she was lowered into the ground.

He had been brutal and hard to her while she lived. But had they not

thrown him into jail, separating mother and son by force? When he was finally released, they had both become the butt of scorn and ridicule. "Look, there comes the wench with her son! Jana's Junnu! Bastard! Jana's Junnu!" From that time on he began to feel ashamed of his mother, and she of him. They went out of their way to avoid one another.

But when she felt the end approaching, she had sent a messenger and asked her son to come and talk to her. Junnu was a wood-cutter at that time, and was ashamed to go to her. Everybody had heard the message. Presently another messenger appeared to ask whether he would not come and see that his mother should have a decent burial. "Let him who will take care of that!" he replied, and did not go.

All that might have been different. Although his mother could have chosen a different sort of life, these thoughts now troubled him. In order to dispel such memories, he went out quickly and busied himself with tying willow strips to his sleigh, to get ready for the winter trips on which he had planned to carry freight, and earn enough money to buy a cow.

He might have found work transporting poles at the other end of his own community. But there he would have come in contact again with those very people whom he had just escaped.

He went to the village in the next district and hired himself out for freight-carrying service.

Half the winter Junnu was busy taking goods from the farther end of the Lake into the interior.

Not a soul knew him there, and no one inquired into his history. Yet he avoided the farms just as if he were in his own home section, kept along the outskirts of the towns and left the other drivers far behind. Except in severe cold weather or during heavy snowfalls, he ate his meals along the roadside, and at night sought shelter only on account of the horse. At the windows, in the yards and at the crossroads, people stared at him, laughed at and ridiculed him. When he took a rest he always retreated to some secluded spot. There he was quite alone, alone with his horse, with which he talked for hours at a time, caressing and pampering him, and helping him over the hills by hitching himself to the sleigh and pulling.

But when Christmas time came the roads began to be more populated, and market people drove from town to town.

Once while he was taking a steep grade with his load, a sleigh full of men in huge fur coats, with red belts round their waists, met him. When they were already upon him they shouted at him to get out of the way. But before he could turn his sleigh aside one of the men on the other sleigh cracked a long whip right over the back of Junnu's stallion. In a rage Junnu leapt from the sled, forgetting his horse which had galloped away in fear, tore up a fence-post from the roadside, and gave chase.

The other sleigh dashed off as fast as the horse could run, but at the next hill Junnu overtook it, and with the strength born of indignation, hurled the post against the sleigh. The passengers dodged just in time, and the post split in two against the dash-board. Junnu, panting with fury, stood behind the sleigh.

On returning, he found his sleigh off the road, beyond the next hill. The horse, quivering and covered with foam, had come to a halt, the pole of the sleigh high up on its back. His fists clenched, sobbing with rage, he shouted curses of vengeance and destruction in the wake of his enemies now well along the quiet road. His fury did not die down until it occurred to him that it was a godsend after all that he did not commit murder. At his next resting-place, where he halted to care for the exhausted horse, he learned that the men had stopped at the same inn, and were probably railway employees. "Let them take care, the scoundrels, that I don't meet them again!"

He felt a longing to get away from the highwaymen and cut-throats, and began to regret the arduousness of his work, and the strain on the horse. Since the pay had been good and he had lost his enthusiasm, he returned home, as always avoiding the villages. At the bottom of the sleigh lay a calf, which he had bought with his earnings.

He had covered her carefully with skins and mats, while he himself perched on the dash-board. The animal, lying there and gazing at him with big bright eyes whenever he turned to stroke her, seemed to him almost like a child. He was in good spirits, hummed to himself and chuckled over his new companion. The nearer he approached home the more vividly did the happy thought come over him: "Now I'll have no suffering or worry. I own a horse, a cow and a cabin. No more worry, no more worry!"

When he reached home he found it almost completely buried under the snow. There was no sign of a road, and no trace of human footsteps. Only the rabbits and partridges had been scampering about on his land.

For Junnu a happy time had begun. The long days of early spring were completely taken up by his own work. He chopped wood; later he took in hay, and prepared beams for his new buildings — a stable and a shed.

One morning his jovial mood was disturbed by the sound of an ax in the woods. No doubt a woodcutter; he would not let him into the house at any price.

Nor did he come. It seemed that he was taking his load to the village along the other shore of the Lake. For many days afterward he did not return. But one day as Junnu was sitting in his sled, the same man drove past and went into the woods without saying a word. Junnu uttered no sound, as he turned his head away. The horse was from the master's farm. It was Tafvo's former truck-horse, but the driver was a stranger.

Day after day the man came, and disappeared in the same way. It seemed as if he did not want to disturb Junnu. Perhaps he was a new laborer, an honest and industrious fellow? The next time they met, Junnu halted his horse and engaged the man in conversation. Tafvo, he heard was going into the service of the state in the spring, to be a railway employeè, since the master no longer wanted him, and they could not agree on wages. Junnu took a fancy to the stranger, who was almost polite to him, expressing surprise over his big earnings during the winter. Junnu became more loquacious and chatted merrily about many things — his new buildings, his cabin, and the stable. He asked the stranger to stop again when he came by. The laborer came, showed gratitude and admiration, and spoke to Junnu as though to a master. However searchingly Junnu looked into his eyes, he could not detect a spark of mockery.

One fine Sunday the master himself came over to pay Junnu a visit. He told him he had dropped his own work in order to make the trip, fearing that Junnu had buried himself forever in the snow drifts. Junnu cooked coffee and offered his guest tobacco he had brought from the village. The master had only words of praise for Junnu's house.

"Why, you'll build up a whole farm here, now that you've made such a good start," he exclaimed.

They chatted together about Junnu's undertaking, and deliberated as to the best place for the crops and pastures. The master advised him to plough up all the land between the house and the lake, though Junnu was of the opinion that the land a little farther off might be better for ploughing. The master reminded him that the best land always lies close to the house.

"Is it really true that I might myself be a regular master? Will the others have to treat me like a human being?" Junnu thought to himself after the master had driven home again.

As the season advanced, he set to work all the more eagerly, inspired as he was by proud dreams. He cut a large strip of woodland on the south side of a slope, and enclosed a little group of shade-trees; then he ploughed the land, cleared it of stumps and made a meadow down by the lake. His happiest days were his Sundays, which he spent in the company of his horse. He would canter away over field and moor, sit down beside the horse with lighted pipe, caress him and offer him tidbits, of bread or salt, which he always kept in his pocket.

The shoots of his spring crop came up green and healthy, and ripened beautifully. When he looked at them and thought of this budding young life, the tears stood in his eyes, and his knees shook.

But precisely at such moments a groundless, unfathomable fear crept over him, a fear that something might happen to destroy his happiness. He sought to define such forebodings more clearly. Once in his sleep he saw this unknown danger creeping toward him in the shape of a dark,

leaden bank of clouds, blustering and thundering over the fields, tearing the roof from his house and dashing him headlong to the ground. He thought about the dream later, brooding over its meaning and racking his brain as to the best way of averting the reality.

If only he could be sure that master might not become angry with him for some reason, and drive him away! They had no written contract. He decided to plant his crops where the master had suggested; perhaps it would be just as well there, though of course more troublesome.

Or perhaps the parson might demand a tithe from him because he owned a cow? Or be angry because he never came to the open-air services, or to communion? What if the state should send the tax-collector and demand taxes of him?

So he went to the parson, taking a vat of butter along, and asking permission to come to confession and communion.

On the same trip he paid his taxes, far in advance, to the collector.

No mortal could now disturb him, and no one had a right to persecute him, he thought as he made his way home in the twilight.

He would have welcomed a reconciliation even with Tafvo, if he had only known where to find him. Perhaps his ill-will had abated somewhat, for he had not shown any signs of hostility?

Just as his last fear seemed to have been dispelled, he thought of his mother. Suppose the community should bring suit against him for the cost of her maintenance? Suppose — it should become known that he was the owner of a horse and a cow! Or the good Lord himself might turn upon him in His wrath because he had been so heartless to her while she was alive? He had not even provided for the ringing of the church bells when she died!

He turned back, went to the overseer of the poor, gave him money for the poor-chest — every other form of compensation was refused. Then he went to the village carpenter and ordered a cross for his mother's grave.

At last he felt at ease. The wicked world and he had settled all their differences. No one could now claim power over him or scheme behind his back. Perhaps no one ever had any such intention?

He became almost kindly toward them. Hostility and bitterness gave way, and he refused to put faith in his evil forebodings when they threatened to prevail.

For two years Junnu lived in his cabin amid desolation and swamps; and not a soul came to disturb him.

But in the spring of the third year, sitting one day on the shore of the Lake fishing, he heard a strange noise in the forest. It sounded like the distant blows of an ax. Then he could hear a tree fall. Who would be felling trees at this season? he wondered. A strange sensation took pos-

session of him. He listened more attentively: certainly men were cutting timber over there. The woods resounded all day long, and the next morning it was clear that the workmen were coming even closer. Early on the third day he made his way stealthily up the hill behind the hut, from where he saw a large spruce tree. He could see it sway and then crash to the ground. He had scarcely an instant to draw breath when another fell close at hand. He wondered whether he ought to go over to see what was happening, to learn who the men were? He returned home, perplexed. He could not rid himself of the dark thoughts that beset him as he worked, even late into the night after he had gone to bed. Unable to sleep, he got up and went out into the forest toward the spot where they had been cutting trees.

The wood was deserted, but there were the trees, lying in a long straight line, along which wooden stakes had been driven into the ground.

Strange, the clearing was not parallel with his master's boundary-line: it ran directly through his land. But the woods belonged to him. Had he sold it? Was Junnu to have a neighbor?

As he continued along the line of the clearing he noticed that it wound about the cliff and then ran off in an absolutely straight line as far as the eye could reach. Junnu returned to his hut and, torn between fear and doubt, lay awake until sunrise, unable to find a satisfactory explanation. His work that day seemed to drag. Again and again he caught himself listening intently, and he realized that the sounds were coming closer and closer. At noon on Saturday everything was quiet once more.

On Sunday he went out to the line. It had come somewhat closer, and seemed to be heading for the valley directly toward his hut.

On returning home Monday morning for breakfast from the forest meadow, where he had been building a fence, he heard the axes right behind the field at the edge of the woods. He could distinctly hear men's voices and the song of many axes. Suddenly a tall fir tree crashed down just at the edge of the wood. Two men stepped out into the open field.

As they advanced along the edge of the field toward the hut, Junnu, who had been sitting outside motionless, turned back and went inside to hide, slamming the door behind him. Unable to restrain his curiosity, he peered through the window and saw the men setting up a strange-looking three-legged affair which they pointed first at the woods and then straight at his hut, as if they wanted to shoot him down through his window.

At the same moment someone passed under the window, turned the door-knob and entered. It was Tafvo. He shook hands with Junnu as though he were an old friend, and sat down on the bench.

"I have some rare guests for you to-day, Junnu!"

"Who may they be?" asked Junnu.

"They are surveyors."

"What are they doing here?"

"We are building a railway line."

The door opened and the surveyors entered.

"Good day! How are you!" They greeted him in a matter-of-fact, superior manner. "Well, well, this seems to be a regular little farm. We didn't know there was anything here at all. Are you master here?"

"Yes, both master and mistress; he cultivates the land and keeps a horse and cow," explained Tafvo, while Junnu took up a position modestly behind the stove, and stared at the strangers without knowing what to think. He had no idea what sort of people they were, or what they wanted. Yet it seemed to him as though he recognized them: he must have seen them somewhere.

The two young surveyors took possession of the place as if it were their own, shed their overcoats and laid their things down on benches and boards. Tafvo set a basket of lunch on the table.

"Could we get a little milk here?" they inquired.

"Go out and get some milk for the gentlemen," Tafvo urged.

Junnu obeyed instinctively. Mechanically he poured the milk from a pan into a pitcher, and returning with it from the shed, he cast a glance in the direction of the fallen trees and then at the strange three-legged contrivance in the field; it was still pointing straight at the house. Then he took the milk in to the gentlemen.

Again he took his stand behind the stove, gazed at his guests, and puffed nervously at his pipe.

After the gentlemen had finished their meal, Tafvo told Junnu that a railway line was to be built through the section, that the work would soon be begun — probably that autumn. "It will come through here, right through the place where this hut is now."

"Where the hut is now?" gasped Junnu.

"Yes, you'll have to make room for us," said one of the men.

"You'll have to put your crops and meadow somewhere else."

"Somewhere else?"

"Yes, yes, no use grumbling when the state commands."

"The state commands?"

"Yes, when it commands, a man must obey."

There was something scornful in Tafvo's manner, and in his eyes a gleam of malicious joy. Doubtfully Junnu looked now at him and now at the others. Yes, they were the same fellows who had whipped his horse that winter.

Without his asking, Tafvo went on to tell Junnu that he had come from town as the assistant of these gentlemen. A number of people — perhaps twenty in all — were about to start laying the line yonder in the wood. They got good wages — three marks a day, but they had to provide their own food. And once the work had begun he was sure of a job until it was completed. The state, he assured Junnu, was a wonderful provider. If a man had a horse, he could make even more money.

"And you have one, haven't you? You bought the old stallion."

Junnu ignored the question.

"And you have a cow, too. You could get good money for her milk when the work here gets under way. And they'll be at it a long time. Maybe you can get work under the state."

"I don't want it."

"But you may be forced to after they take away your best land and tear down your building to make room for the railroad."

"Suppose I don't let them tear it down?"

"They'll have to tear it down; they can't turn aside from the line that the state has marked out. They have torn down bigger places than yours. They never spare a place or go around it, unless it's a church."

Junnu wanted to avoid a quarrel, so he said nothing to this.

The men were now preparing to leave. They threw a few coppers on the table in payment for the milk, and returned to their tripod, which they now set in the midst of the enclosure. Tafvo drove a stake into the ground at that place, another in Junnu's yard, and a third near the wood at the far end of the field. They had shouted to Junnu before leaving that any one who removed the stakes was subject to a heavy fine. Then they disappeared into the forest.

Other men came with axes, and crossed his field and yard; but they did not see him, as he cowered in his house as though half-paralyzed. He simply stared after them. It was not long before they began to cut trees on the other side of the wood.

Not until they had all left did it begin to dawn on Junnu what had happened.

If it were just a joke there could not have been so many men. Perhaps they were railway men? Maybe the threat was true, and the railroad would go straight through his house, ruining all his buildings and fields? Perhaps hundreds of workmen would come and trample down everything he possessed? It would be like living in the very center of a town.

The whole situation suddenly became clear.

Would he have to go away out into the world among strangers? That he would refuse to do! He would not move from the spot! They might come and try, but his club would smash the skull of anyone who tried to touch him.

The blood rushed to his head. Without asking his leave, they had felled his timber and trampled down his crops. How they bragged as they sat at his table, the arrogant fools, boasted that they would tear down his roof over his head! Why had he not attacked them with the poker? Why had he not given them a farewell that would have warned them never to return?

Maybe he could still overtake them? He made ready for the pursuit, but again he hesitated.

No, not that way. Not by fighting and force. That wasn't necessary. Right was on his side. Just let them try to come. Let them begin the fight. He was not afraid of the government, or its accomplices.

He went out and looked at the stakes they had driven into the ground, tore them up and tossed them into the stove.

Autumn came, and work on the railway had gone on with increasing celerity. The forest reverberated on all sides; dynamite explosions resounded; and the ceaseless noise of stone-cutters' hammers. All day long the shouts of teamsters and the "heave — ho! heave — ho!" of the track layers rang through the woods.

Junnu's hut lay directly between two towns and on its site a large station was to be erected. At this point the trade and commerce of three counties were to converge. The environs of the hut must be cleared of stumps, fields levelled and buildings razed. Junnu had received formal notice to move.

But Junnu had not left the spot: he had no intention of doing so. He noticed nothing of what was going on about him, avoiding the workmen and pretending not to recognize anyone. He refused to sell milk, and to those who asked for lodging he replied that the hut was not large enough even for himself.

He would not even permit the use of his bathroom or out house.

The foremen had instructed him repeatedly to tear down his buildings before All-Saints-Day, otherwise it would be done by the employees of the State, at his expense. Junnu answered that he would not move a finger.

The hut at least must be torn down without delay, since the tracks were to run directly through it.

"Then let the tracks go to one side!"

"No detours permitted."

"You might have chosen some other spot. Who said the tracks must run through here?"

They regarded him as a lunatic, and decided to let him alone until the last possible moment. Maybe in the course of time he would come to his senses, the pig-headed lout!

But Junnu's rancor only increased as the tracks closed in on him from both sides.

When he had finished the summer's work he began to haul lumber. To those who asked what he was doing, he replied that he was planning an addition to his house.

The foremen prevailed upon his old master to have a talk with him.

"Will you indemnify me for the expense of moving and transplanting my crops?" asked Junnu angrily.

"Why should I? Who would force me to?"

"Will the state indemnify me?"

"I don't believe the state will give in to you."

"But what was your idea when you gave me the right to live here for ten years? Are you going to throw me out?"

"For all I care, you may stay here twenty years."

Junnu began to harbor a secret suspicion against his master. His eyes blinked irresolutely; he fidgeted nervously as he stood there talking. Surely he could prevent the insult and injury if he were so minded, but he was in league with the others. He had always been a friend of the high and mighty; that's why he was now hobnobbing with the railway men and hiring out his horses to them.

But let them all be against him! He had justice on his side; he would insist on his rights. He would frighten them away, make them yield and have revenge on them all.

Why did they come and disturb him? He was only minding his own business!

Couldn't they have laid their tracks on one side or the other? Indeed, they would never raze his hut, so long as he could stand on his legs.

They would hardly have made so much fuss over him, had he not had justice on his side. Nor would they have offered him work if they had felt free to take liberties with him.

It was only an empty threat when the foremen had ordered him to clear out! Unless he wanted to be evicted by the magistrate?

All-Saints-Day approached, and work was progressing rapidly. The tracks were close upon him. Roots were being dug out and rocks blown up. The rafters of his house creaked and debris rained against the window panes. Junnu could not leave the house without meeting men everywhere, who seemed to regard him with ill-concealed contempt. Whenever they saw him at a distance they flung sarcastic remarks at him, asking whether he could milk his cow dry, how he managed to keep tab on all his cattle and hired help, and whether he had been awarded the contract for the station?

He lived in a continual state of siege. Finally he dared not even go away from the yard, fearing that in his absence they might come and tear the house down. Only on holidays did he venture to go to the village for flour. When at last his hatred got complete control of him, he never left the house at all except to feed his two animals. All day long he lay on the bench and dozed, or kept stealthy watch over the movements of his enemies.

On the eve of All-Saints-Day he saw Tafvo making for the house. A moment later he was in the room. Junnu was cutting tobacco in a corner, and pretended not to see him. Tafvo remained near the stove, warming his hands.

"They've asked me to tell you that you've got to clear your things out. To-morrow noon they begin tearing the house down . . . It will be well

for you to obey," he added. Junnu made no answer. "You'd only get the worst of it if you tried force."

Junnu kept on cutting. Once he bore down on the board so hard that it creaked.

"How would you like to sell it?" grinned Tafvo, looking about quickly. "I'll buy it if you're willing. A hundred marks cash down. What do you say?"

"No!"

"Well, you can't get a better price from anyone. The magistrate is here and he's just sworn to throw you out if you don't move of your own will. They say they'll blow you up, hut and all, if you keep on being so pig-headed. — Or do you want the police to get their claws on you again?"

"Out with you!" hissed Junnu, leaping up from the bench.

"Very well, I'll go. But you'll soon follow!"

When he saw Junnu brandishing the massive bench as if it were a little stool, he hurried out. Hardly had he closed the door when the bench came crashing against the post and into the vestibule, where it hit an old iron cauldron.

"Give up my house up to a dirty swine like that! It's all his fault. He brought the whole pack here. Without him those strangers would never have come! Now they want to smash my hut? With the help of the magistrate they're going to clear me out of my own home? Let them try it, those ——!"

Before he had a chance to lock the door, the magistrate had entered the room together with one of the foremen.

Junno neither took off his cap nor did he rise from the bench where he crouched. He made no return to their greeting.

"Well, well," he exclaimed with a scornful laugh, "now I suppose they have come to chase me out?"

"It looks as though we might have to do that very thing, if you don't get out of your own free will. But why be so stubborn, Junnu? You'll see, it's no use when the state commands," said the old magistrate soothingly.

"What right has the state to command?"

"The state has bought the land, and the road is going through here; nothing can change that."

"Is that so? But I haven't seen any deed of sale."

"That's not necessary. You are living on another man's land."

"But the house is mine, and I have a right to use the land here for ten years without rent."

"Who gave you that right?" asked the foreman.

"That's the agreement I have with my master."

"Have you any papers?"

"No, I haven't, but that was the agreement."

"Well, my good fellow, the agreement is worthless, since your master owned the land and received payment in full for it."

"He received payment? But I didn't get a penny for my house, and he hasn't made me any offer."

"That is not our affair, so long as your master was the legal owner, and received his money."

"My master? But how could he get money for my house?"

"He got the money, as I just told you. That's an affair to be settled between the two of you. The state has nothing to do with your agreements and differences."

For a while Junnu sat speechless on the bench. Then he got up. "Is it true," he asked, "that he is just as mean a cur as all the rest of you?"

"Do you realize who you are talking to?" cried the magistrate, boiling with rage and coming up close to him.

"With forgers and government robbers! Get out of my house! Out with you all!"

"Junnu, I warn you for the last time."

"Just keep on warning, you liar, you cur!" The words nearly choked him.

"The fellow's crazy. What's the use in quarreling with him?" Turning to the laborers who gathered before the door, the foreman commanded, "Pitch in and rip it down! We have no time for arguing."

"There you have it. Talking won't help you," said the magistrate in a conciliatory tone, making one last effort to win Junnu over.

Yet without realizing anything, or giving heed to any idea but the one uppermost in his mind — that they were determined to drive him out of his home and trample down his fields and possessions — he rushed into the yard past the magistrate, in pursuit of the foreman. The laborers gave way before his onrush, while crowds of curious bystanders pressed in from all sides.

"You'll not tear down my house!" he shouted, pulling up a fence-post.

"Do your duty!" commanded the foreman.

Not a man moved.

"What, are you afraid of one man! Get up on the roof, or I'll discharge the lot of you!" cried the foreman.

"And I'll smash the skull of any one of you who dares to budge!"

"You can't scare us with that sort of talk!" said Tafvo, as he ran up the ladder past Junnu.

Junnu aimed a blow at him, but missed, and when the fence-post in his hand broke in two, he seized the ladder and shook it so furiously that it crashed to the ground. Tafvo, who had just reached the eaves of the roof, came down with it. He uttered a wild cry, then collapsed in an unconscious heap.

At the same moment the magistrate and the foremen seized Junnu by

the nape of the neck. They called others to help them, forced him against the wall and then to the ground, fastened a rope round his arms, and threw him into his own sleigh.

"There, that's what you get for resisting the authorities . . . I'll teach you a lesson, you blockhead!" muttered the magistrate, breathing heavily and tugging at the rope. "Get the horse out of the stable, men!"

The prostrate Junnu saw them lead his horse out of the stable and hitch him to the sleigh. He pulled madly at the rope in an effort to get up, but when he realized that this was impossible, he cowered down, motionless. Lying there, waiting until the magistrate was ready to leave, he saw the ladder set up against his house once again. When the sleigh jolted off rattling over the bare ground, the shingles began to fly from his roof. Some of them, caught by the autumn wind, were carried far off into the neighboring fields.

"At last we've smoked the bear out of his den!" someone behind him chuckled. Scornful shouts just reached his ears.

He was let off with a fine, a bill for damages and several month's imprisonment for violent interference with an official in the performance of his lawful duties. Half a year elapsed between his arrest, and the trial and conviction. It was now early summer.

With head shaved clean and wearing a prisoner's garb, he was taken shortly before St. John's Day from the village lock-up to the county jail, and there given his liberty.

From the jail he made off directly for the wilderness, which still had an irresistible attraction for him.

His horse had been sold to cover the costs of the trial, while the cow had been entrusted to the care of an old woman, who promised to take charge of her during the winter.

Junnu was pale, emaciated and stooped, his brow furrowed with trouble and care. His cheeks were hollow and the bones so protruding, it appeared as though he were continually setting his jaws. His eyes seemed sunk further back into his head, now and then they shone with an uncanny glint.

Neither before the bar nor in the lock-up, nor even on his departure in the company of the well-known trusty, did he have much to say. From the moment they had forced him into his own sleigh, a prisoner, he had maintained a stubborn silence.

During the trial his record was read, and it was clear from this that he had served once before as a thief, and besides was the fatherless son of an unmarried woman. He had not defended himself, nor made any attempt to refute the witnesses. Neither a denial nor a confession had come from his lips. When his master explained to the judge that this man's mentality had always been considered inferior — he was subject to violent fits of temper for no reason at all — Junnu allowed the fellow to talk on. The others believed everything.

At that time dark passions began to rise within him, which were not quelled by the months of imprisonment in the lonely cell.

His rancor did not make him feel dizzy any more, and his mind did not become blank, as it used to do. No, this resentment was stored up in a secret corner of his heart. There it lay and grew and was assimilated in his blood and embedded in his soul.

He made up his mind to burn down his master's buildings, to slay Tafvo and the magistrate, shoot the railway men from ambush in the woods, and wreak vengeance on all who had cheated him of his money and his farm, tortured and mocked and hunted him like a wild beast.

The master had flattered him and praised his farm, only to get twice as much indemnity from the state. And Tafvo had triumphed over him. They had all laughed at and scorned him in his misfortune.

No, there was no justice to be found among men. They were all wolves, savage curs, who devour and tear to shreds whomever they lay hands on, draining the last drop of blood from their victims' body.

But he would have revenge, revenge — even if he should die in the attempt!

While his thoughts ran on thus, his eyes flashed wildly and his teeth ground with rage.

Without realizing it, he walked onward through the meadow, straight into the wilderness. But his strength had been sapped by the long months in prison, and he had to pause by the wayside to catch his breath. He felt the pangs of hunger, and wanted to smoke. He had had no tobacco for months.

His rancor left him for a moment, his passion for revenge was dissipated, and the tension of his mind relieved.

What had he done that men were so cruel to him, that the world trampled on him thus? Had he not always tried to be obliging and helpful to those he was said to have sinned against? Had he not always left others alone, even avoided them? Was it not he who had always turned off the road and given others the right of way? Why should they attack him?

And yet — if he could only, in spite of everything, flee to some place where no one would see or hear him, get another horse and build another hut!

But how was he to know that they would not again destroy everything and overpower him, tie him with ropes, and throw him into jail? And they might take his cow, too? Perhaps she had been stolen already? This thought hastened his footsteps in the direction where he hoped to find her.

The night was cool and damp, and the trees with their young foliage, looked as though they trembled. He knew every inch of the way, for he used to travel this road often. But nothing seemed as it was in the old days. The farther he penetrated into the forest, the wider the path became. Everywhere the woods were devastated. The cow-path had been torn up

and deeply rutted by wagons. The wheels had scraped the very bark from the trees. Bridges extended over the swamps, and along the roadside lay the trunks of mighty spruce trees.

And suddenly it seemed to him as though all these tracks and symbols of destruction led away, as though men had fled in tumultuous haste with their carts, and had gone in terror straight into some abyss. They had dropped their work, driven thence by a magic power, giving them no rest by night and no peace by day. The wild spirits of the forest had hurled rocks down from the cliffs into the valley, destroying by night everything that men had toiled at by day, and building up again what men had destroyed — Junnu's little hut and shed! And now the men had been driven off in a mad, headlong rush, so that the weak and infirm were swept beyond the edge, down to where the wreckage of wagons, sleighs, wheels, axles and horses' skeletons, lay in a jumbled mass.

As darkness came on, Junnu gloated over this spectacle. He wanted to make sure that all the men had gone. Urged on by his impatience, he hurried along aimlessly, as though mysterious voices were whispering in his ear. He left the path and headed straight through the woods in the direction of Lake Musti.

How often had he had such visions during the sleepless nights of his imprisonment! He had seen in his mind's eye the road getting broader and the woods receding, horses and men dragging off rocks and trees in long rows, men digging roots and blowing up rocks, climbing onto his roof, tearing down the rafters and scattering the shingles to the winds. Often he had seen his stove standing deserted among the ruins, as though they had gone through a destructive fire.

When he came out of the dark wood, a scene of desolation suddenly confronted him.

The railway was finished, the ties laid, the ditches dug, the tracks in place, and up on them, directly in front of him, was a row of sand-cars and a belching, puffing locomotive.

Fatigued and scarcely able to stand, he trudged on along the tracks toward his hut. Out in the meadow were piles of building stones and wheelbarrows turned up on end.

He scanned the familiar field for his house, but could see nothing of it. The field was covered with sand. There was not a trace of his hut, his stable, or the beams for the new bathroom and shed. In their stead was only a foundation, probably for a new house. The only relic of his former possessions was a piece of the ladder.

Fear overcame him. He felt as though a host of invisible evil spirits were haunting him, lurking in the woods, stretching out their arms to catch him by the hair, rustling and whispering about him. He was ready to dart away into the wilderness, when he perceived not far off the windows and doors of countless houses, all in a row. From that direction

came the locomotives. He ran down to the shore of the Lake. Hardly had he crossed the tracks, where the loose gravel grated under his feet, when he discovered that he was standing in front of his old bath-house. There he paused.

It seemed to be inhabited. Through a crack in the door he heard snoring within, and as he peered into the room he spied an old woman lying on the floor in front of the fire, asleep. It was the woman who had charge of Junnu's cow.

"The cow? Where is my cow?"

"She's probably still at her feed," said the woman, sleepily. "They've allowed this old shack to stay for a while, though they've threatened to tear it down. They'll get around to it as soon as they've finished their other jobs. They're talking of opening the road on St. John's Day, you know. — Yes, they ripped your house down, and your master sold the walls to Tafvo, who moved them a bit farther into the woods. They say he sells brandy there, and has got mighty rich into the bargain. You can find your horse out at his place, too. The loafer went and bought it at auction for fifty marks. — Yes, this world harbors a lot of mean scoundrels," she added by way of consolation, as she saw Junnu crouching in the corner, his elbows resting on his knees. "They steal everything from a man, everything he owns, his property and house. That's what they did to you. They tear down the hut that another man has built, and sell his only horse. If your master had had his way, he would have let them take the hay you made on your place, but I wouldn't.

"Yes, your cow is safe up there. In the evening she goes from here to the night pasture. You can't let her out without watching her, except at night, ever since these confounded locomotives started to run. The cows don't seem to realize they're more dangerous than a horse; two have already been run down this summer. And a person doesn't get any compensation for the loss, either. Every one is supposed to watch his own cattle."

"Who told you to stay here?"

"It didn't seem wise to move away. I get a good price for the milk."

"Do you sell milk to them?"

"Yes, they made me. They said they had a right to it. Besides, your hay was here."

"Where does Omena go for the night pasture?"

"Not far. Over there behind the tracks with the other cows. You ought to be able to hear her bell. You can find her easy enough. — I'd like to offer you a little breakfast coffee if I may."

But Junnu could not wait. He got up and hurried to the woods, where he disappeared among the trees.

Day was already beginning to dawn over the ridge. There was bustling and noise everywhere.

Junnu walked along the tracks, listening. Then he went off a way and returned. It seemed as though he could not make up his mind to stay near them.

Not one day longer would he remain in this place. He could find his cow, tie a rope to her and be on his way before anyone noticed him. Then his road might lead him whither it would, into the wilderness, or to some other district — only away from here, far away. This neighborhood seemed haunted.

He had not gone far when he suddenly heard the tinkling of a familiar bell. He paused, then went on.

He came to a small field. He knew it well: last summer he had burned charcoal there, and sowed his oats. In the fields stood the horse that was once his own. He was lean now and wasted. His winter hide had not been clipped, and was worn off in places. His back was swollen, and here and there the bare flesh showed through. The corners of his mouth were jagged and torn, and his head drooped. He seemed to recognize his old master, but could not go to him because of the tether. He neighed softly and rubbed his head against Junnu's sleeve.

"What have they done to you, the dirty beasts! The dogs!" mourned Junnu in a voice that was hardly audible.

And forgetting that he was no longer the rightful owner, he seized the animal by the halter and led him off.

"Hey there, fellow — trying to steal my horse?" a voice cried from the woods.

It was Tafvo.

As he recognized Junnu, he started back in astonishment, but noticing that Junnu was unarmed (he himself had an ax), he took courage and hurried up. "Get away from my horse!" he ordered, swinging his ax and tugging at the halter.

Junnu let go. Standing still a moment, helpless and weak, he was clearly in no mood to quarrel. Tafvo dealt him a blow in the ribs; Junnu tottered and fell.

Tafvo mounted the horse, dug him in the flanks and rode off.

Junnu had no strength left to give chase. He did not even feel bitter, as he let the other man, cantering across the field, call him a horse-thief and bandit and threaten him with a new law-suit. At last Tafvo's voice died away in the forest.

"Now faster, you dumb beast!" he heard Tafvo shout to his horse.

"Ah yes, it's his," thought Junnu drowsily. "Everything belongs to them . . . they can do as they like."

He collapsed, as all thought of resistance left him . . .

The morning sun shone brightly into his eyes as it rose over the edge of the woods. He felt dizzy and lay in a sleepy torpor on the ground, forgetting his cow, his intended flight — everything besides.

Scarcely had he opened his eyes again when a shrill whistle was heard. It struck him like the crack of a whip. He heard a rattling and a clattering of iron chains. Was he still in jail, or was he dreaming all this?

When he at last realized that it was the locomotive that was approaching, he thought again of his cow, and darted away toward the tracks, as if to prevent some unknown catastrophe, avert some danger.

A small herd of cows stood beyond the tracks, close to the right of way. Junnu recognized the foremost among them as his own. It seemed as though she wanted to come over to him. She raised her head, lowed, and began to trot. The bell on her neck tinkled with every bound.

But as she neared the tracks and was on the point of climbing the embankment, the locomotive at the curve whistled, racing along in its mad course.

The cow stopped right on the tracks, stared at the approaching object, and stood motionless, riveted to the spot.

The whistle blew frantically, but the engine could not stop.

Junnu dashed up, gesticulating, and shouting as loudly as he could. He seized the cow by the horns, but she resisted when he tried to drag her. He got her halfway over when the engine, amid the curses and threats of the engineer and the grating of the brakes, struck the animal, severing the carcass before his very eyes.

The festive train, all bedecked with pennants, stopped on St. John's Day at Musti Lake station. The half-finished building was gayly decorated with foliage. This was the first train on the new road — a holiday train. The railway company had invited as its guests all the employees and officials of the road, and as its guests of honor all the prominent men of the surrounding districts.

No one had seen or heard anything of Junnu since the engine had killed his cow. He himself, it was said, had gone on to the village. But now and then the engineers of the freight trains reported that they had spied him slinking about at the border of the forest near the tracks.

At a point where the road, after passing the station, suddenly makes a sharp curve and continues between cliffs and past a bog, a man crouched on his knees and attempted to rip a rail from the tie. Covered with sweat, he cast furtive glances toward the station, he tried with violent blows of the ax to shatter the spike. This failing he used a birch-pole as a lever to pry the rail loose from the tie.

He had saved up his last bit of energy for the task. All his enemies, all his persecutors and tormentors, the railway men, the magistrate, his old master, Tafvo, the laborers, the locomotive and its engineer — they as well as all the others who had been allied against him must be destroyed at one blow, hurled into one common grave — the miry, bottomless bog.

That was his plan. It had taken shape during those days while he

roamed about in the forest, with hunger gnawing at his vitals, enticed from his lair only by the locomotive as it rushed past, and drawn irresistibly down to the tracks, where he had made careful observations. At night he had stolen thither and examined the tracks to see how they were put together. And he had heard the laborers discussing the holiday train that was to run on St. John's Day. . . .

If he only had a crowbar and a sledge-hammer — then he could do the work in a moment . . .

The spike refused to budge.

But he *must* finish the job, he *must!*

The locomotive chugged and snorted at the station. The people gathered in a black mass, got into the cars with shouts of exultation. Now the band struck up, so that the whole forest resounded.

Applying all his strength, he smote the spike with his ax. At last the head of the spike broke off. He pried his pole under the rail. It moved a little. But the other spike was still in place, and the rail sprang back into its proper position.

The engine whistled just before it left the station — a long, shrill shriek.

The second spike was just as firm as the other. Junnu feared he might not be able to shatter it until the train had passed — passed in safety.

Was he to postpone it until some other time? No, he would not; he could not. It must be done now, this moment. All his torments should be avenged now.

He seized the ax and began once more to pound the iron. The ax struck a stone. Sparks flew in all directions — and the ax was damaged beyond hope of repair. The train was now quite close, and the pounding of the pistons could be heard with the utmost distinctness.

He took up the pole again, slipped it under the rail, and threw the whole weight of his body against it. The rail loosened, the tie cracked, and the spike came out.

Now, now they will not escape from his clutch!

But as he threw his body against the pole once more, the pole broke and threw him onto the tracks. Burning with fury, he jumped up, grasped the rail with his hands, clawed it with his fingers, gripped the spike with his teeth. He no longer realized what he was doing . . .

The engine was now directly behind his back.

It would get away from him; everyone would be saved, and continue their journey over his mangled corpse . . .

Never!

He ran off to one side, saw the engine with its fluttering pennants and gleaming eyes of glass, thundering and tearing onward. A new idea came to him in a flash.

He stooped down, his arm around a huge boulder. This he raised aloft, and struggled toward the tracks. He shut his eyes, brandished the

boulder and hurled it at the onrushing locomotive. Hearing a terrific crash, he tottered and fell in a faint to the ground.

When he regained his senses he realized that he was flat on his back. The floor he lay on was in motion, and about him was a crowd of excited people, all talking and gesticulating at the same time. He saw the railway men, the magistrate, his master, and Tafvo. His head ached; the blood trickled down over his face.

The locomotive uttered a long, shrill, exulting whistle, a cloud of black smoke curled by, and Junnu knew that he was aboard the holiday train. It bore him on and on, to the city ——

Russia

INTRODUCTION

IN THE case of Russia, as in that of several other countries, it is possible to trace the beginnings of literature to a remote epoch, but so far as formal written narrative is concerned, it is not until the Nineteenth Century that we find any sort of consistent development of the art of story-writing. Nikolai Gogol (1799–1837) is usually considered the founder of the modern Russian novel and the short story. "We are all," wrote Dostoievsky, "descended from Gogol's *Cloak*." *The Cloak* is one of Gogol's finest stories. Lermontov and Pushkin followed shortly after, developing the more romantic type of tale. With Turgenev and Tolstoy and Dostoievsky, the Russian novel reached its highest point of development. These writers were primarily novelists, though the first two, in particular, made use of the shorter form for some of their finest work. Turgenev, above all, wrote many of his most beautiful stories in the short novel form.

The later Russians are more especially identified with the development of the short story form: Chekhov, Gorky, Garshin, Korolenko, in particular, have excelled as masters of the episode. Of them all, Gorky stands supreme as master of the short novel, as Chekhov stands supreme in the realm of the short story.

IVAN TURGENEV

(1818–1883)

Ivan Turgenev was born at Orel, Russia, in 1818. His early education was received in his native land. Although the greater part of his life was spent in Paris, his novels and stories are concerned exclusively with his own people. He was one of the greatest of all Russian writers.

Turgenev wrote a number of short novels. *A Lear of the Steppes* is one of his most affecting and powerful works. It was written at Weimar in 1870.

The translation that follows was made by Constance Garnett, and is reprinted from the volume *A Lear of the Steppes*, etc., London and New York, 1914, by special arrangement with the publishers, William Heinemann, Ltd., of London, The Macmillan Co., of New York, and of the translator.

A LEAR OF THE STEPPES

WE WERE a party of six, gathered together one winter evening at the house of an old college friend. The conversation turned on Shakespeare, on his types, and how profoundly and truly they were taken from the very heart of humanity. We admired particularly their truth to life, their actuality. Each of us spoke of the Hamlets, the Othellos, the Falstaffs, even the Richard the Thirds and Macbeths — the two last only potentially, it is true, resembling their prototypes — whom he had happened to come across.

"And I, gentlemen," cried our host, a man well past middle age, "used to know a King Lear!"

"How was that?" we questioned him.

"Oh, would you like me to tell you about him?"

"Please do."

And our friend promptly began his narrative.

I

All my childhood (he began), and early youth, up to the age of fifteen, I spent in the country, on the estate of my mother, a wealthy landowner in X —— province. Almost the most vivid impression, that has remained in my memory of that far-off time, is the figure of our nearest neighbour, Martin Petrovitch Harlov. Indeed it would be difficult

for such an impression to be obliterated: I never in my life afterwards met anything in the least like Harlov. Picture to yourselves a man of gigantic stature. On his huge carcase was set, a little askew, and without the least trace of a neck, a prodigious head. A perfect haystack of tangled yellowish-grey hair stood up all over it, growing almost down to the bushy eyebrows. On the broad expanse of his purple face, that looked as though it had been peeled, there protruded a sturdy knobby nose; diminutive little blue eyes stared out haughtily, and a mouth gaped open that was diminutive too, but crooked, chapped, and of the same colour as the rest of the face. The voice that proceeded from this mouth, though hoarse, was exceedingly strong and resonant. . . . Its sound recalled the clank of iron bars, carried in a cart over a badly paved road; and when Harlov spoke, it was as though some one were shouting in a high wind across a wide ravine. It was difficult to tell just what Harlov's face expressed, it was such an expanse. . . . One felt one could hardly take it all in at one glance. But it was not disagreeable — a certain grandeur indeed could be discerned in it, only it was exceedingly astounding and unusual. And what hands he had — positive cushions! What fingers, what feet! I remember I could never gaze without a certain respectful awe at the four-foot span of Martin Petrovitch's back, at his shoulders, like millstones. But what especially struck me was his ears! They were just like great twists of bread, full of bends and curves; his cheeks seemed to support them on both sides. Martin Petrovitch used to wear — winter and summer alike — a Cossack dress of green cloth, girt about with a small Tcherkess strap, and tarred boots. I never saw a cravat on him; and indeed what could he have tied a cravat round? He breathed slowly and heavily, like a bull, but walked without a sound. One might have imagined that having got into a room, he was in constant fear of upsetting and overturning everything, and so moved cautiously from place to place, sideways for the most part, as though slinking by. He was possessed of a strength truly Herculean, and in consequence enjoyed great renown in the neighbourhood. Our common people retain to this day their reverence for Titanic heroes. Legends were invented about him. They used to recount that he had one day met a bear in the forest and had almost vanquished him; that having once caught a thief in his beehouse, he had flung him, horse and cart and all, over the hedge, and so on. Harlov himself never boasted of his strength. "If my right hand is blessed," he used to say, "so it is God's will it should be!" He was proud, only he did not take pride in his strength, but in his rank, his descent, his common sense.

"Our family's descended from the Swede Harlus," he used to maintain. "In the princely reign of Ivan Vassilievitch the Dark (fancy how long ago!) he came to Russia, and that Swede Harlus did not wish to be a Finnish count — but he wished to be a Russian nobleman, and he was

inscribed in the golden book. It's from him we Harlovs are sprung! . . . And by the same token, all of us Harlovs are born flaxen-haired, with light eyes and clean faces, because we're children of the snow!"

"But, Martin Petrovitch," I once tried to object, "there never was an Ivan Vassilievitch the Dark. There was an Ivan Vassilievitch the Terrible. The Dark was the name given to the great prince Vassily Vassilievitch."

"What nonsense will you talk next!" Harlov answered serenely; "since I say so, so it was!"

One day my mother took it into her head to commend him to his face for his really remarkable incorruptibility.

"Ah, Natalia Nikolaevna!" he protested almost angrily; "what a thing to praise me for, really! We gentlefolk can't be otherwise; so that no churl, no low-born, servile creature dare even imagine evil of us! I am a Harlov, my family has come down from" — here he pointed up somewhere very high aloft in the ceiling — "and me not be honest! How is it possible?"

Another time a high official, who had come into the neighbourhood and was staying with my mother, fancied he could make fun of Martin Petrovitch. The latter had again referred to the Swede Harlus, who came to Russia . . .

"In the days of King Solomon?" the official interrupted.

"No, not of King Solomon, but of the great Prince Ivan Vassilievitch the Dark."

"But I imagine," the official pursued, "that your family is much more ancient, and goes back to antediluvian days, when there were still mastodons and megatheriums about."

These scientific names were absolutely meaningless to Martin Petrovitch; but he realised that the dignitary was laughing at him.

"May be so," he boomed, "our family is, no doubt, very ancient; in those days when my ancestor was in Moscow, they do say there was as great a fool as your excellency living there, and such fools are not seen twice in a thousand years."

The high official was in a furious rage, while Harlov threw his head back, stuck out his chin, snorted and disappeared. Two days later, he came in again. My mother began reproaching him. "It's a lesson for him, ma'am," interposed Harlov, "not to fly off without knowing what he's about, to find out whom he has to deal with first. He's young yet, he must be taught." The dignitary was almost of the same age as Harlov; but this Titan was in the habit of regarding every one as not fully grown up. He had the greatest confidence in himself and was afraid of absolutely no one. "Can they do anything to me? Where on earth is the man that can?" he would ask, and suddenly he would go off into a short but deafening guffaw.

II

My mother was exceedingly particular in her choice of acquaintances, but she made Harlov welcome with special cordiality and allowed him many privileges. Twenty-five years before, he had saved her life by holding up her carriage on the edge of a deep precipice, down which the horses had already fallen. The traces and straps of the harness broke, but Martin Petrovitch did not let go his hold of the wheel he had grasped, though the blood spurted out under his nails. My mother had arranged his marriage. She chose for his wife an orphan girl of seventeen, who had been brought up in her house; he was over forty at the time. Martin Petrovitch's wife was a frail creature — they said he carried her into his house in the palms of his hands — and she did not live long with him. She bore him two daughters, however. After her death, my mother continued her good offices to Martin Petrovitch. She placed his elder daughter in the district school, and afterwards found her a husband, and already had another in her eye for the second. Harlov was a fairly good manager. He had a little estate of nearly eight hundred acres, and had built on to his place a little, and the way the peasants obeyed him is indescribable. Owing to his stoutness, Harlov scarcely ever went anywhere on foot: the earth did not bear him. He used to go everywhere in a low racing droshky, himself driving a rawboned mare, thirty years old, with a scar on her shoulder, from a wound which she had received in the battle of Borodino, under the quartermaster of a cavalry regiment. This mare was always somehow lame in all four legs; she could not go at a walking pace, but could only change from a trot to a canter. She used to eat mugwort and wormwood along the hedges, which I have never noticed any other horse do. I remember I always used to wonder how such a broken-down nag could draw such a fearful weight. I won't venture to repeat how many hundred-weight were attributed to our neighbour. In the droshky behind Martin Petrovitch's back perched his swarthy page, Maximka. With his face and whole person squeezed close up to his master, and his bare feet propped on the hind axle bar of the droshky, he looked like a little leaf or worm which had clung by chance to the gigantic carcase before him. This same page boy used once a week to shave Martin Petrovitch. He used, so they said, to stand on a table to perform this operation. Some jocose persons averred that he had to run round his master's chin. Harlov did not like staying long at home, and so one might often see him driving about in his invariable equipage, with the reins in one hand (the other he held smartly on his knee with the elbow crooked upwards), with a diminutive old cap on the very top of his head. He looked boldly about him with his little bear-like eyes, shouted in a voice of thunder to all the peasants, artisans, and tradespeople he met. Priests he greatly disliked, and he would send vigorous abjurations after them when he met them. One day on overtaking

me (I was out for a stroll with my gun), he hallooed at a hare that lay near the road in such a way that I could not get the roar and ring of it out of my ears all day.

III

My mother, as I have already stated, made Martin Petrovitch very welcome. She knew what a profound respect he entertained for her person. "She is a real gentlewoman, one of our sort," was the way he used to refer to her. He used to style her his benefactress, while she saw in him a devoted giant, who would not have hesitated to face a whole mob of peasants in defence of her; and although no one foresaw the barest possibility of such a contingency, still, to my mother's notions, in the absence of a husband — she had early been left a widow — such a champion as Martin Petrovitch was not to be despised. And besides, he was a man of upright character, who curried favour with no one, never borrowed money or drank spirits; and no fool either, though he had received no sort of education. My mother trusted Martin Petrovitch: when she took it into her head to make her will, she asked him to witness it, and he drove home expressly to fetch his round iron-rimmed spectacles, without which he could not write. And with spectacles on nose, he succeeded, in a quarter of an hour, with many gasps and groans and great effort, in inscribing his Christian name, father's name, and surname and his rank and designation, tracing enormous quadrangular letters, with tails and flourishes. Having completed this task, he declared he was tired out, and that writing for him was as hard work as catching fleas. Yes, my mother had a respect for him . . . he was not, however, admitted beyond the dining-room in our house. He carried a very strong odour about with him; there was a smell of the earth, of decaying forest, of marsh mud about him. "He's a forest-demon!" my old nurse would declare. At dinner a special table used to be laid apart in a corner for Martin Petrovitch, and he was not offended at that, he knew other people were ill at ease sitting beside him, and he too had greater freedom in eating. And he did eat too, as no one, I imagine, has eaten since the days of Polyphemus. At the very beginning of dinner, by way of a precautionary measure, they always served him a pot of some four pounds of porridge, "else you'd eat me out of house and home," my mother used to say. "That I should, ma'am," Martin Petrovitch would respond, grinning.

My mother liked to hear his reflections on any topic connected with the land. But she could not support the sound of his voice for long together. "What's the meaning of it, my good sir!" she would exclaim; "you might take something to cure yourself of it, really! You simply deafen me. Such a trumpet-blast!"

"Natalia Nikolaevna! benefactress!" Martin Petrovitch would rejoin,

as a rule, "I'm not responsible for my throat. And what medicine could have any effect on me — kindly tell me that? I'd better hold my tongue for a bit."

In reality, I imagine, no medicine could have affected Martin Petrovitch. He was never ill.

He was not good at telling stories, and did not care for it. "Much talking gives me asthma," he used to remark reproachfully. It was only when one got him on to the year 1812 — he had served in the militia, and had received a bronze medal, which he used to wear on festive occasions attached to a Vladimir ribbon — when one questioned him about the French that he would relate some few anecdotes. He used, however, to maintain stoutly all the while that there never had been any Frenchmen, real ones, in Russia, only some poor marauders, who had straggled over from hunger, and that he had given many a good drubbing to such rabble in the forests.

IV

And yet even this self-confident, unflinching giant had his moments of melancholy and depression. Without any visible cause he would suddenly begin to be sad; he would lock himself up alone in his room, and hum — positively hum — like a whole hive of bees; or he would call his page Maximka, and tell him to read aloud to him out of the solitary book which had somehow found its way into his house, an odd volume of Novikovsky's *The Worker at Leisure*, or else to sing to him. And Maximka, who by some strange freak of chance, could spell out print, syllable by syllable, would set to work with the usual chopping up of the words and transference of the accent, bawling out phrases of the following description: "but man in his wilfulness draws from this empty hypothesis, which he applies to the animal kingdom, utterly opposite conclusions. Every animal separately," he says, "is not capable of making me happy!" and so on. Or he would chant in a shrill little voice a mournful song, of which nothing could be distinguished but: "Ee . . . eee . . . ee . . . a . . . ee . . . a . . . ee . . . Aaa . . . ska! O . . . oo . . . oo . . . bee . . . ee . . . ee . . . ee . . . la!" While Martin Petrovitch would shake his head, make allusions to the mutability of life, how all things turn to ashes, fade away like grass, pass — and will return no more! A picture had somehow come into his hands, representing a burning candle, which the winds, with puffed-out cheeks, were blowing upon from all sides; below was the inscription: "Such is the life of man." He was very fond of this picture; he had hung it up in his own room, but at ordinary, not melancholy, times he used to keep it turned face to the wall, so that it might not depress him. Harlov, that colossus, was afraid of death! To the consolations of religion, to prayer, however, he rarely had recourse in

his fits of melancholy. Even then he chiefly relied on his own intelligence. He had no particular religious feeling; he was not often seen in church; he used to say, it is true, that he did not go on the ground that, owing to his corporeal dimensions, he was afraid of squeezing other people out. The fit of depression commonly ended in Martin Petrovitch's beginning to whistle, and suddenly, in a voice of thunder, ordering out his droshky, and dashing off about the neighbourhood, vigorously brandishing his disengaged hand over the peak of his cap, as though he would say, "for all that, I don't care a straw!" He was a regular Russian.

V

Strong men, like Martin Petrovitch, are for the most part of a phlegmatic disposition; but he, on the contrary, was rather easily irritated. He was specially short-tempered with a certain Bitchkov, who had found a refuge in our house, where he occupied a position between that of a buffoon and a dependant. He was the brother of Harlov's deceased wife, had been nicknamed Souvenir as a little boy, and Souvenir he had remained for every one, even the servants, who addressed him, it is true, as Souvenir Timofeitch. His real name he seemed hardly to know himself. He was a pitiful creature, looked down upon by every one; a toady, in fact. He had no teeth on one side of his mouth, which gave his little wrinkled face a crooked appearance. He was in a perpetual fuss and fidget; he used to poke himself into the maids' room, or into the counting-house, or into the priest's quarters, or else into the bailiff's hut. He was repelled from everywhere, but he only shrugged himself up, and screwed up his little eyes, and laughed a pitiful mawkish laugh, like the sound of rinsing a bottle. It always seemed to me that had Souvenir had money, he would have turned into the basest person, unprincipled, spiteful, even cruel. Poverty kept him within bounds. He was only allowed drink on holidays. He was decently dressed, by my mother's orders, since in the evenings he took a hand in her game of picquet or boston. Souvenir was constantly repeating, "Certainly, d'rectly, d'rectly." "D'rectly what?" my mother would ask, with annoyance. He instantly drew back his hands, in a scare, and lisped, "At your service, ma'am!" Listening at doors, backbiting, and, above all, quizzing, teasing, were his sole interest, and he used to quiz as though he had a right to, as though he were avenging himself for something. He used to call Martin Petrovitch brother, and tormented him beyond endurance. "What made you kill my sister, Margarita Timofeevna?" he used to persist, wriggling about before him and sniggering. One day Martin Petrovitch was sitting in the billiard-room, a cool apartment, in which no one had ever seen a single fly, and which our neighbour, disliking heat and sunshine, greatly favoured on this account. He was sitting between the wall and the billiard-table.

Souvenir was fidgeting before his bulky person, mocking him, grimacing. . . . Martin Petrovitch wanted to get rid of him, and thrust both hands out in front of him. Luckily for Souvenir he managed to get away, his brother-in-law's open hands came into collision with the edge of the billiard-table, and the billiard-board went flying off all its six screws. . . . What a mass of batter Souvenir would have been turned into under those mighty hands!

VI

I HAD long been curious to see how Martin Petrovitch arranged his household, what sort of a home he had. One day I invited myself to accompany him on horseback as far as Eskovo (that was the name of his estate). "Upon my word, you want to have a look at my dominion," was Martin Petrovitch's comment. "By all means! I'll show you the garden, and the house, and the threshing-floor, and everything. I have plenty of everything." We set off. It was reckoned hardly more than a couple of miles from our place to Eskovo. "Here it is — my dominion!" Martin Petrovitch roared suddenly, trying to turn his immovable neck, and waving his arm to right and left. "It's all mine!" Harlov's homestead lay on the top of a sloping hill. At the bottom, a few wretched-looking peasants' huts clustered close to a small pond. At the pond, on a washing platform, an old peasant woman in a check petticoat was beating some soaked linen with a bat.

"Axinia!" boomed Martin Petrovitch, but in such a note that the rooks flew up in a flock from an oat-field near . . . "Washing your husband's breeches?"

The peasant woman turned at once and bowed very low.

"Yes, sir," sounded her weak voice.

"Ay, ay! Yonder, look," Martin Petrovitch continued, proceeding at a trot alongside a half-rotting wattle fence, "that is my hemp-patch; and that yonder's the peasants'; see the difference? And this here is my garden; the apple-trees I planted, and the willows I planted too. Else there was no timber of any sort here. Look at that, and learn a lesson!"

We turned into the courtyard, shut in by a fence; right opposite the gate, rose an old tumbledown lodge, with a thatch roof, and steps up to it, raised on posts. On one side stood another, rather newer, and with a tiny attic; but it too was a ramshackly affair. "Here you may learn a lesson again," observed Harlov; "see what a little manor-house our fathers lived in; but now see what a mansion I have built myself." This "mansion" was like a house of cards. Five or six dogs, one more ragged and hideous than another, welcomed us with barking. "Sheep-dogs!" observed Martin Petrovitch. "Pure-bred Crimeans! Sh, damned brutes! I'll come and strangle you one after another!" On the steps of the new

building, there came out a young man, in a long full nankeen overall, the husband of Martin Petrovitch's elder daughter. Skipping quickly up to the droshky, he respectfully supported his father-in-law under the elbow as he got up, and even made as though he would hold the gigantic feet, which the latter, bending his bulky person forward, lifted with a sweeping movement across the seat; then he assisted me to dismount from my horse.

"Anna!" cried Harlov, "Natalia Nikolaevna's son has come to pay us a visit; you must find some good cheer for him. But where's Evlampia?" (Anna was the name of the elder daughter, Evlampia of the younger.)

"She's not at home; she's gone into the fields to get cornflowers," responded Anna, appearing at a little window near the door.

"Is there any junket?" queried Harlov.

"Yes."

"And cream too?"

"Yes."

"Well, set them on the table, and I'll show the young gentleman my own room meanwhile. This way, please, this way," he added, addressing me, and beckoning with his forefinger. In his own house he treated me less familiarly; as a host he felt obliged to be more formally respectful. He led me along a corridor. "Here is where I abide," he observed, stepping sideways over the threshold of a wide doorway, "this is my room. Pray walk in!"

His room turned out to be a big unplastered apartment, almost empty; on the walls, on nails driven in askew, hung two riding-whips, a three-cornered hat, reddish with wear, a single-barrelled gun, a sabre, a sort of curious horse-collar inlaid with metal plates, and the picture representing a burning candle blown on by the winds. In one corner stood a wooden settle covered with a parti-coloured rug. Hundreds of flies swarmed thickly about the ceiling; yet the room was cool. But there was a very strong smell of that peculiar odour of the forest which always accompanied Martin Petrovitch.

"Well, is it a nice room?" Harlov questioned me.

"Very nice."

"Look-ye, there hangs my Dutch horse-collar," Harlov went on, dropping into his familiar tone again. "A splendid horse-collar! got it by barter off a Jew. Just you look at it!"

"It's a good horse-collar."

"It's most practical. And just sniff it . . . what leather!" I smelt the horse-collar. It smelt of rancid oil and nothing else.

"Now, be seated, — there on the stool; make yourself at home," observed Harlov, while he himself sank on to the settle, and seemed to fall into a doze, shutting his eyes and even beginning to snore. I gazed at him with-

out speaking, with ever fresh wonder; he was a perfect mountain — there was no other word! Suddenly he started.

"Anna!" he shouted, while his huge stomach rose and fell like a wave on the sea; "what are you about? Look sharp! Didn't you hear me?"

"Everything's ready, father; come in," I heard his daughter's voice.

I inwardly marvelled at the rapidity with which Martin Petrovitch's behests had been carried out; and followed him into the drawing-room, where, on a table covered with a red cloth with white flowers on it, lunch was already prepared: junket, cream, wheaten bread, even powdered sugar and ginger. While I set to work on the junket, Martin Petrovitch growled affectionately, "Eat, my friend, eat, my dear boy; don't despise our country cheer," and sitting down again in a corner, again seemed to fall into a doze. Before me, perfectly motionless, with downcast eyes, stood Anna Martinovna, while I saw through the window her husband walking my cob up and down the yard, and rubbing the chain of the snaffle with his own hands.

VII

My mother did not like Harlov's elder daughter; she called her a stuck-up thing. Anna Martinovna scarcely ever came to pay us her respects, and behaved with chilly decorum in my mother's presence, though it was by her good offices she had been well educated at a boarding-school, and had been married, and on her wedding-day had received a thousand roubles and a yellow Turkish shawl, the latter, it is true, a trifle the worse for wear. She was a woman of medium height, thin, very brisk and rapid in her movements, with thick fair hair and a handsome dark face, on which the pale-blue narrow eyes showed up in a rather strange but pleasing way. She had a straight thin nose, her lips were thin too, and her chin was like the loop-end of a hair-pin. No one looking at her could fail to think: "Well, you are a clever creature — and a spiteful one, too!" And for all that, there was something attractive about her too. Even the dark moles, scattered "like buck-wheat" over her face, suited her and increased the feeling she inspired. Her hands thrust into her kerchief, she was slily watching me, looking downwards (I was seated, while she was standing). A wicked little smile strayed about her lips and her cheeks and in the shadow of her long eyelashes. "Ugh, you pampered little fine gentleman!" this smile seemed to express. Every time she drew a breath, her nostrils slightly distended — this, too, was rather strange. But all the same, it seemed to me that were Anna Martinovna to love me, or even to care to kiss me with her thin cruel lips, I should simply bound up to the ceiling with delight. I knew she was very severe and exacting, that the peasant women and girls went in terror of her — but what of that? Anna Martinovna secretly excited my imagination . . . though after all, I was only fifteen then, — and at that age! . . .

Martin Petrovitch roused himself again. "Anna!" he shouted, "you ought to strum something on the pianoforte . . . young gentlemen are fond of that."

I looked round: there was a pitiful semblance of a piano in the room.

"Yes, father," responded Anna Martinovna. "Only what am I to play the young gentleman? He won't find it interesting."

"Why, what did they teach you at your young ladies' seminary?"

"I've forgotten everything — besides, the notes are broken."

Anna Martinovna's voice was very pleasant, resonant and rather plaintive — like the note of some birds of prey.

"Very well," said Martin Petrovitch, and he lasped into dreaminess again. "Well," he began once more, "wouldn't you like, then, to see the threshing-floor, and have a look round? Volodka will escort you. — Hi, Volodka!" he shouted to his son-in-law, who was still pacing up and down the yard with my horse, "take the young gentleman to the threshing-floor . . . and show him my farming generally. But I must have a nap! So! good-bye!"

He went out and I after him. Anna Martinovna at once set to work rapidly, and, as it were, angrily, clearing the table. In the doorway, I turned and bowed to her. But she seemed not to notice my bow, and only smiled again, more maliciously than before.

I took my horse from Harlov's son-in-law and led him by the bridle. We went together to the threshing-floor, but as we discovered nothing very remarkable about it, and as he could not suppose any great interest in farming in a young lad like me, we returned through the garden to the main road.

VIII

I was well acquainted with Halov's son-in-law. His name was Vladimir Vassilievitch Sletkin. He was an orphan, brought up by my mother, and the son of a petty official, to whom she had intrusted some business. He had first been placed in the district school, then he had entered the "seignorial counting-house," then he had been put into the service of the government stores, and, finally, married to the daughter of Martin Petrovitch. My mother used to call him a little Jew, and certainly, with his curly hair, his black eyes always moist, like damson jam, his hook nose, and wide red mouth, he did suggest the Jewish type. But the colour of his skin was white and he was altogether very good-looking. He was of a most obliging temper, so long as his personal advantage was not involved. Then he promptly lost all self-control from greediness, and was moved even to tears. He was ready to whine the whole day long to gain the paltriest trifle; he would remind one a hundred times over of a promise, and be hurt and complain if it were not carried out at once. He liked sauntering

about the fields with a gun; and when he happened to get a hare or a wild duck, he would thrust his booty into his game-bag with peculiar zest, saying, "Now, you may be as tricky as you like, you won't escape me! Now you're *mine!*"

"You've a good horse," he began in his lisping voice, as he assisted me to get into the saddle; "I ought to have a horse like that! But where can I get one? I've no such luck. If you'd ask your mamma, now — remind her."

"Why, has she promised you one?"

"Promised? No; but I thought that in her great kindness ——"

"You should apply to Martin Petrovitch."

"To Martin Petrovitch?" Sletkin repeated, dwelling on each syllable. "To him I'm no better than a worthless page, like Maximka. He keeps a tight hand on us, that he does, and you get nothing from him for all your toil."

"Really?"

"Yes, by God. He'll say, 'My word's sacred!' — and there, it's as though he's chopped it off with an axe. You may beg or not, it's all one. Besides, Anna Martinovna, my wife, is not in such favour with him as Evlampia Martinovna. O merciful God, bless us and save us!" he suddenly interrupted himself, flinging up his hands in despair. "Look! what's that? A whole half-rood of oats, our oats, some wretch has gone and cut. The villain! Just see! Thieves! thieves! It's a true saying, to be sure, don't trust Eskovo, Beskovo, Erino, and Byelino! (these were the names of four villages near). Ah, ah, what a thing! A rouble and a half's worth, or, maybe, two roubles, loss!"

In Sletkin's voice, one could almost hear sobs. I gave my horse a poke in the ribs and rode away from him.

Sletkin's ejaculations still reached my hearing, when suddenly at a turn in the road, I came upon the second daughter of Harlov, Evlampia, who had, in the words of Anna Martinovna, gone into the fields to get corn-flowers. A thick wreath of those flowers was twined about her head. We exchanged bows in silence. Evlampia, too, was very good-looking; as much so as her sister, though in a different style. She was tall and stoutly built; everything about her was on a large scale: her head, and her feet and hands, and her snow-white teeth, and especially her eyes, prominent, languishing eyes, of the dark blue of glass beads. Everything about her, while still beautiful, had positively a monumental character (she was a true daughter of Martin Petrovitch). She did not, it seemed, know what to do with her massive fair mane, and she had twisted it in three plaits round her head. Her mouth was charming, crimson and fresh as a rose, and as she talked her upper lip was lifted in the middle in a very fascinating way. But there was something wild and almost fierce in the glance of her huge eyes. "A free bird, wild Cossack breed," so Martin

Petrovitch used to speak of her. I was in awe of her . . . This stately beauty reminded one of her father.

I rode on a little farther and heard her singing in a strong, even, rather harsh voice, a regular peasant voice; suddenly she ceased. I looked round and from the crest of the hill saw her standing beside Harlov's son-in-law, facing the rood of oats. The latter was gesticulating and pointing, but she stood without stirring. The sun lighted up her tall figure, and the wreath of cornflowers shone brilliantly blue on her head.

IX

I BELIEVE I have already mentioned that, for this second daughter of Harlov's too, my mother had already prepared a match. This was one of the poorest of our neighbours, a retired army major, Gavrila Fedulitch Zhitkov, a man no longer young, and, as he himself expressed it, not without a certain complacency, however, as though recommending himself, "battered and broken down." He could barely read and write, and was exceedingly stupid, but secretly aspired to become my mother's steward, as he felt himself to be a "man of action." "I can warm the peasants' hides for them, if I can do anything," he used to say, almost gnashing his own teeth, "because I was used to it," he used to explain, "in my former duties, I mean." Had Zhitkov been less of a fool, he would have realised that he had not the slightest chance of being steward to my mother, seeing that, for that, it would have been necessary to get rid of the present steward, one Kvitsinsky, a very capable Pole of great character, in whom my mother had the fullest confidence. Zhitkov had a long face, like a horse's; it was all overgrown with hair of a dusty whitish colour; his cheeks were covered with it right up to the eyes; and even in the severest frosts, it was sprinkled with an abundant sweat, like drops of dew. At the sight of my mother, he drew himself upright as a post, his head positively quivered with zeal, his huge hands slapped a little against his thighs, and his whole person seemed to express: "Command! . . . and I will strive my utmost!" My mother was under no illusion on the score of his abilities, which did not, however, hinder her from taking steps to marry him to Evlampia.

"Only, will you be able to manage her, my good sir?" she asked him one day.

Zhitkov smiled complacently.

"Upon my word, Natalia Nikolaevna! I used to keep a whole regiment in order; they were tame enough in my hands; and what's this? A trumpery business!'

"A regiment's one thing, sir, but a well-bred girl, a wife, is a very different matter," my mother observed with displeasure.

"Upon my word, ma'am! Natalia Nikolaevna!" Zhitkov cried again,

"that we're quite able to understand. In one word: a young lady, a delicate person!"

"Well!" my mother decided at length, "Evlampia won't let herself be trampled upon."

X

One day — it was the month of June, and evening was coming on — a servant announced the arrival of Martin Petrovitch. My mother was surprised: we had not seen him for over a week, but he had never visited us so late before. "Something has happened!" she exclaimed in an undertone. The face of Martin Petrovitch, when he rolled into the room and at once sank into a chair near the door, wore such an unusual expression, it was so preoccupied and positively pale, that my mother involuntarily repeated her exclamation aloud. Martin Petrovitch fixed his little eyes upon her, was silent for a space, sighed heavily, was silent again, and articulated at last that he had come about something . . . which . . . was of a kind, that on account of . . .

Muttering these disconnected words, he suddenly got up and went out.

My mother rang, ordered the footman, who appeared, to overtake Martin Petrovitch at once and bring him back without fail, but the latter had already had time to get into his droshky and drive away.

Next morning my mother, who was astonished and even alarmed, as much by Martin Petrovitch's strange behaviour as by the extraordinary expression of his face, was on the point of sending a special messenger to him, when he made his appearance. This time he seemed more composed.

"Tell me, my good friend, tell me," cried my mother, directly she saw him, "what ever has happened to you? I thought yesterday, upon my word I did . . . 'Mercy on us!' I thought, 'Hasn't our old friend gone right off his head?'"

"I've not gone off my head, madam," answered Martin Petrovitch; "I'm not that sort of man. But I want to consult with you."

"What about?"

"I'm only in doubt, whether it will be agreeable to you in this same contingency ——"

"Speak away, speak away, my good sir, but more simply. Don't alarm me! What's this same contingency? Speak more plainly. Or is it your melancholy come upon you again?"

Harlov scowled. "No, it's not melancholy — that comes upon me in the new moon; but allow me to ask you, madam, what do you think about death?"

My mother was taken aback. "About what?"

"About death. Can death spare any one whatever in this world?"

"What have you got in your head, my good friend? Who of us is immortal? For all you're born a giant, even to you there'll be an end in time."

"There will! oh, there will!" Harlov assented and he looked downcast. "I've had a vision come to me in my dreams," he brought out at last.

"What are you saying?" my mother interrupted him.

"A vision in my dreams," he repeated — "I'm a seer of visions, you know!"

"You!"

"I. Didn't you know it?" Harlov sighed. "Well, so. . . . Over a week ago, madam, I lay down, on the very last day of eating meat before St. Peter's fast-day; I lay down after dinner to rest a bit, well, and so I fell asleep, and dreamed a raven colt ran into the room to me. And this colt began sporting about and grinning. Black as a beetle was the raven colt." Harlov ceased.

"Well?" said my mother.

"And all of a sudden this same colt turns round, and gives me a kick in the left elbow, right in the funny bone. . . . I waked up; my arm would not move nor my leg either. Well, thinks I, it's paralysis; however, I worked them up and down, and got them to move again; only there were shooting pains in the joints a long time, and there are still. When I open my hand, the pains shoot through the joints."

"Why, Martin Petrovitch, you must have lain upon your arm somehow and crushed it."

"No, madam; pray, don't talk like that! It was an intimation . . . referring to my death, I mean."

"Well, upon my word," my mother was beginning.

"An intimation. Prepare thyself, man, as 'twere to say. And therefore, madam, here is what I have to announce to you, without a moment's delay. Not wishing," Harlov suddenly began shouting, "that the same death should come upon me, the servant of God, unawares, I have planned in my own mind this: to divide — now during my lifetime — my estate between my two daughters, Anna and Evlampia, according as God Almighty directs me —" Martin Petrovitch stopped, groaned, and added, "without a moment's delay."

"Well, that would be a good idea," observed my mother; "though I think you have no need to be in a hurry."

"And seeing that herein I desire," Harlov continued, raising his voice still higher, "to be observant of all due order and legality, so I humbly beg your young son, Dmitri Semyonovitch — I would not venture, madam, to trouble you — I beg the said Dmitri Semyonovitch, your son, and I claim of my kinsman, Bitchkov, as a plain duty, to assist at the ratification of the formal act and transference of possession to my two daughters — Anna, married, and Evlampia, spinster. Which act will be drawn up in readiness

the day after to-morrow at twelve o'clock, at my own place, Eskovo, also called Kozulkino, in the presence of the ruling authorities and functionaries, who are thereto invited."

Martin Petrovitch with difficulty reached the end of this speech, which he had obviously learnt by heart, and which was interspersed with frequent sighs. . . . He seemed to have no breath left in his chest; his pale face was crimson again, and he several times wiped the sweat off it.

"So you've already composed the deed dividing your property?" my mother queried. "When did you manage that?"

"I managed it . . . . oh! Neither eating, nor drinking ——"

"Did you write it yourself?"

"Volodka . . . . oh! helped."

"And have you forwarded a petition?"

"I have, and the chamber has sanctioned it, and notice has been given to the district court, and the temporary division of the local court has . . . oh! . . . been notified to be present."

My mother laughed. "I see, Martin Petrovitch, you've made every arrangement already — and how quickly. You've not spared money, I should say?"

"No, indeed, madam."

"Well, well. And you say you want to consult with me. Well, my little Dmitri can go; and I'll send Souvenir with him, and speak to Kvitsinsky. . . . But you haven't invited Gavrila Fedulitch?"

"Gavrila Fedulitch — Mr. Zhitkov — has had notice . . . from me also. As a betrothed, it was only fitting."

Martin Petrovitch had obviously exhausted all the resources of his eloquence. Besides, it always seemed to me that he did not look altogether favourably on the match my mother had made for his daughter; possibly, he had expected a more advantageous marriage for his darling Evlampia.

He got up from his chair, and made a scrape with his foot. "Thank you for your consent."

"Where are you off to?" asked my mother. "Stay a bit; I'll order some lunch to be served you."

"Much obliged," responded Harlov. "But I cannot. . . . Oh! I must get home."

He backed and was about to move sideways, as his habit was, through the door.

"Stop, stop a minute," my mother went on, "can you possibly mean to make over the whole of your property without reserve to your daughters?"

"Certainly, without reserve."

"Well, but how about yourself — where are you going to live?"

Harlov positively flung up his hands in amazement. "You ask where? In my house, at home, as I've lived hitherto . . . so henceforward. Whatever difference could there be?"

"You have such confidence in your daughters and your son-in-law, then?"

"Were you pleased to speak of Volodka? A poor stick like him? Why, I can do as I like with him, whatever it is . . . what authority has he? As for them, my daughters, that is, to care for me till I'm in the grave, to give me meat and drink, and clothe me. . . . Merciful heavens! it's their first duty. I shall not long be an eyesore to them. Death's not over the hills — it's upon my shoulders."

"Death is in God's hands," observed my mother; "though that is their duty, to be sure. Only pardon me, Martin Petrovitch; your elder girl, Anna, is well known to be proud and imperious, and — well — the second has a fierce look. . . ."

"Natalia Nikolaevna!" Harlov broke in, "why do you say that? . . . Why, as though they . . . My daughters . . . Why, as though I . . . Forget their duty? Never in their wildest dreams . . . Offer opposition? To whom? Their parent . . . Dare to do such a thing? Have they not my curse to fear? They've passed their life long in fear and in submission — and all of a sudden . . . Good Lord!"

Harlov choked, there was a rattle in his throat.

"Very well, very well," my mother made haste to soothe him; "only I don't understand all the same what has put it into your head to divide the property up now. It would have come to them afterwards, in any case. I imagine it's your melancholy that's at the bottom of it all."

"Eh, ma'am," Harlov rejoined, not without vexation, "you will keep coming back to that. There is, maybe, a higher power at work in this, and you talk of melancholy. I thought to do this, madam, because in my own person, while still in life, I wish to decide in my presence, who is to possess what, and with what I will reward each, so that they may possess, and feel thankfulness, and carry out my wishes, and what their father and benefactor has resolved upon, they may accept as a bountiful gift."

Harlov's voice broke again.

"Come, that's enough, that's enough, my good friend," my mother cut him short; "or your raven colt will be putting in an appearance in earnest."

"O Natalia Nikolaevna, don't talk to me of it," groaned Harlov. "That's my death come after me. Forgive my intrusion. And you, my little sir, I shall have the honour of expecting you the day after to-morrow."

Martin Petrovitch went out; my mother looked after him, and shook her head significantly. "This is a bad business," she murmured, "a bad business. You noticed" — she addressed herself to me — "he talked, and all the while seemed blinking, as though the sun were in his eyes; that's a bad sign. When a man's like that, his heart's sure to be heavy, and misfortune threatens him. You must go over the day after to-morrow with Vikenty Osipovitch and Souvenir."

XI

On the day appointed, our big family coach, with seats for four, harnessed with six bay horses, and with the head coachman, the grey-bearded and portly Alexeitch, on the box, rolled smoothly up to the steps of our house. The importance of the act upon which Harlov was about to enter, and the solemnity with which he had invited us, had had their effect on my mother. She had herself given orders for this extraordinary state equipage to be brought out, and had directed Souvenir and me to put on our best clothes. She obviously wished to show respect to her protégé. As for Kvitsinsky, he always wore a frockcoat and white tie. Souvenir chattered like a magpie all the way, giggled, wondered whether his brother would apportion him anything, and thereupon called him a dummy and an old fogey. Kvitsinsky, a man of severe and bilious temperament, could not put up with it at last. "What can induce you," he observed, in his distinct Polish accent, "to keep up such a continual unseemly chatter? Can you really be incapable of sitting quiet without these 'wholly superfluous' (his favourite phrase) inanities?" "All right, d'rectly," Souvenir muttered discontentedly, and he fixed his squinting eyes on the carriage window. A quarter of an hour had not passed, the smoothly trotting horses had scarcely begun to get warm under the straps of their new harness, when Harlov's homestead came into sight. Through the widely open gate, our coach rolled into the yard. The diminutive postillion, whose legs hardly reached halfway down his horse's body, for the last time leaped up with a babyish shriek into the soft saddle, old Alexeitch at once spread out and raised his elbows, a slight "wo-o" was heard, and we stopped. The dogs did not bark to greet us, and the serf boys, in long smocks that gaped open over their big stomachs, had all hidden themselves. Harlov's son-in-law was awaiting us in the doorway. I remember I was particularly struck by the birch boughs stuck in on both sides of the steps, as though it were Trinity Sunday. "Grandeur upon grandeur," Souvenir, who was the first to alight, squeaked through his nose. And certainly there was a solemn air about everything. Harlov's son-in-law was wearing a plush cravat with a satin bow, and an extraordinarily tight tail-coat; while Maximka, who popped out behind his back, had his hair so saturated with kvas, that it positively dripped. We went into the parlour, and saw Martin Petrovitch towering — yes, positively towering — motionless, in the middle of the room. I don't know what Souvenir's and Kvitsinsky's feelings were at the sight of his colossal figure; but I felt something akin to awe. Martin Petrovitch was attired in a grey Cossack coat — his militia uniform of 1812 it must have been — with a black stand-up collar. A bronze medal was to be seen on his breast, a sabre hung at his side; he laid his left hand on the hilt, with his right he was leaning on the table, which was covered with a red cloth. Two sheets of paper, full of writing, lay

on the table. Harlov stood motionless, not even gasping; and what dignity was expressed in his attitude, what confidence in himself, in his unlimited and unquestionable power! He barely greeted us with a motion of the head, and barely articulating "Be seated!" pointed the forefinger of his left hand in the direction of some chairs set in a row. Against the right-hand wall of the parlour were standing Harlov's daughters wearing their Sunday clothes: Anna, in a shot lilac-green dress, with a yellow silk sash; Evlampia, in pink, with crimson ribbons. Near them stood Zhitkov, in a new uniform, with the habitual expression of dull and greedy expectation in his eyes, and with a greater profusion of sweat than usual over his hirsute countenance. On the left side of the room sat the priest, in a threadbare snuff-coloured cassock, an old man, with rough brown hair. This head of hair, and the dejected lack-lustre eyes, and the big wrinkled hands, which seemed a burden even to himself, and lay like two rocks on his knees, and the tarred boots which peeped out beneath his cassock, all seemed to tell of a joyless laborious life. His parish was a very poor one. Beside him was the local police captain, a fattish, palish, dirty-looking little gentleman, with soft puffy little hands and feet, black eyes, black short-clipped moustaches, a continual cheerful but yet sickly little smile on his face. He had the reputation of being a great taker of bribes, and even a tyrant, as the expression was in those days. But not only the gentry, even the peasants were used to him, and liked him. He bent very free and easy and rather ironical looks around him; it was clear that all this "procedure" amused him. In reality, the only part that had any interest for him was the light lunch and spirits in store for us. But the attorney sitting near him, a lean man with a long face, narrow whiskers from his ears to his nose, as they were worn in the days of Alexander the First, was absorbed with his whole soul in Martin Petrovitch's proceedings, and never took his big serious eyes off him. In his concentrated attention and sympathy, he kept moving and twisting his lips, though without opening his mouth. Souvenir stationed himself next him, and began talking to him in a whisper, after first informing me that he was the chief freemason in the province. The temporary division of the local court consists, as every one knows, of the police captain, the attorney, and the rural police commissioner; but the latter was either absent or kept himself in the background, so that I did not notice him. He bore, however, the nickname "the non-existent" among us in the district, just as there are tramps called "the non-identified." I sat next Souvenir, Kvitsinsky next me. The face of the practical Pole showed unmistakable annoyance at our "wholly superfluous" expedition, and unnecessary waste of time. . . . "A grand lady's caprices! these Russian grandees' fancies!" he seemed to be murmuring to himself. . . . "Ugh, these Russians!"

XII

When we were all seated, Martin Petrovitch hunched his shoulders, cleared his throat, scanned us all with his bear-like little eyes, and with a noisy sigh began as follows:

"Gentlemen, I have called you together for the following purpose. I am grown old, gentlemen, and overcome by infirmities. . . . Already I have had an intimation, the hour of death steals on, like a thief in the night. . . . Isn't that so, father?" he addressed the priest.

The priest started. "Quite so, quite so," he mumbled, his beard shaking.

"And therefore," continued Martin Petrovitch, suddenly raising his voice, "not wishing the said death to come upon me unawares, I purposed" . . . Martin Petrovitch proceeded to repeat, word for word, the speech he had made to my mother two days before. "In accordance with this my determination," he shouted louder than ever, "this deed" (he struck his hand on the papers lying on the table) "has been drawn up by me, and the presiding authorites have been invited by me, and wherein my will consists the following points will treat. I have ruled, my day is over!"

Martin Petrovitch put his round iron spectacles on his nose, took one of the written sheets from the table, and began:

"Deed of partition of the estate of the retired non-commissioned officer and nobleman, Martin Harlov, drawn up by himself in his full and right understanding, and by his own good judgment, and wherein is precisely defined what benefits are assigned to his two daughters, Anna and Evlampia — bow!" — (they bowed), "and in what way the serfs and other property, and live stock, be apportioned between the said daughters! Under my hand!"

"This is their document!" the police captain whispered to Kvitsinsky, with his invariable smile, "they want to read it for the beauty of the style, but the legal deed is made out formally, without all these flourishes."

Souvenir was beginning to snigger. . . .

"In accordance with my will," put in Harlov, who had caught the police captain's remark.

"In accordance in every point," the latter hastened to respond cheerfully; "only, as you're aware, Martin Petrovitch, there's no dispensing with formality. And unnecessary details have been removed. For the chamber can't enter into the question of spotted cows and fancy drakes."

"Come here!" boomed Harlov to his son-in-law, who had come into the room behind us, and remained standing with an obsequious air near the door. He skipped up to his father-in-law at once.

"There, take it and read! It's hard for me. Only mind and don't mumble it! Let all the gentlemen present be able to understand it."

Sletkin took the paper in both hands, and began timidly, but distinctly, and with taste and feeling, to read the deed of partition. There was set

forth in it with the greatest accuracy just what was assigned to Anna and what to Evlampia, and how the division was to be made. Harlov from time to time interspersed the reading with phrases. "Do you hear, that's for you, Anna, for your zeal!" or, "That I give you, Evlampia!" and both the sisters bowed, Anna from the waist, Evlampia simply with a motion of the head. Harlov looked at them with stern dignity. "The farm house" (the little new building) was assigned by him to Evlampia, as the younger daughter, "by the well-known custom." The reader's voice quivered and resounded at these words, unfavourable for himself; while Zhitkov licked his lips. Evlampia gave him a sidelong glance; had I been in Zhitkov's shoes, I should not have liked that glance. The scornful expression, characteristic of Evlampia, as of every genuine Russian beauty, had a peculiar shade at that moment. For himself, Martin Petrovitch reserved the right to go on living in the rooms he occupied, and assigned to himself, under the name of "rations," a full allowance "of normal provisions," and ten roubles a month for clothes. The last phrase of the deed Harlov wished to read himself. "And this my parental will," it ran, "to carry out and observe is a sacred and binding duty on my daughters, seeing it is a command; seeing that I am, after God, their father and head, and am not bounden to render an account to any, nor have so rendered. And do they carry out my will, so will my fatherly blessing be with them, but should they not so do, which God forbid, then will they be overtaken by my paternal curse that cannot be averted, now and for ever, amen!" Harlov raised the deed high above his head. Anna at once dropped on her knees and touched the ground with her forehead; her husband, too, doubled up after her. "Well, and you?" Harlov turned to Evlampia. She crimsoned all over, and she too bowed to the earth; Zhitkov bent his whole carcase forward.

"Sign!" cried Harlov, pointing his forefinger to the bottom of the deed. "Here: 'I thank and accept, Anna. I thank and accept, Evlampia!'"

Both daughters rose, and signed one after another. Sletkin rose too, and was feeling after the pen, but Harlov moved him aside, sticking his middle finger into his cravat, so that he gasped. The silence lasted a moment. Suddenly Martin Petrovitch gave a sort of sob, and muttering, "Well, now it's all yours!" moved away. His daughters and son-in-law looked at one another, went up to him and began kissing him just above his elbow. His shoulder they could not reach.

XIII

THE police captain read the real formal document, the deed of gift, drawn up by Martin Petrovitch. Then he went out on to the steps with the attorney and explained what had taken place to the crowd assembled at the gates, consisting of the witnesses required by law and other people from the

neighbourhood, Harlov's peasants, and a few house-serfs. Then began the ceremony of the new owners entering into possession. They came out, too, upon the steps, and the police captain pointed to them when, slightly scowling with one eyebrow, while his careless face assumed for an instant a threatening air, he exhorted the crowd to "subordination." He might well have dispensed with these exhortations: a less unruly set of countenances than those of the Harlov peasants, I imagine, have never existed in creation. Clothed in thin smocks and torn sheepskins, but very tightly girt round their waists, as is always the peasants' way on solemn occasions, they stood motionless as though cut out of stone, and whenever the police captain uttered any exclamation such as, "D'ye hear, you brutes? d'ye understand, you devils?" they suddenly bowed all at once, as though at the word of command. Each of these "brutes and devils" held his cap tight in both hands, and never took his eyes off the window, where Martin Petrovitch's figure was visible. The witnesses themselves were hardly less awed. "Is any impediment known to you," the police captain roared at them, "against the entrance into possession of these the sole and legitimate heirs and daughters of Martin Petrovitch Harlov?"

All the witnesses seemed to huddle together at once.

"Do you know any, you devils?" the police captain shouted again.

"We know nothing, your excellency," responded sturdily a little old man, marked with small-pox, with a clipped beard and whiskers, an old soldier.

"I say! Eremeitch's a bold fellow!" the witnesses said of him as they dispersed.

In spite of the police captain's entreaties, Harlov would not come out with his daughters on to the steps. "My subjects will obey my will without that!" he answered. Something like sadness had come over him on the completion of the conveyance. His face had grown pale. This new unprecedented expression of sadness looked so out of place on Martin Petrovitch's broad and kindly features that I positively was at a loss what to think. Was an attack of melancholy coming over him? The peasants, on their side, too, were obviously puzzled. And no wonder! "The master's alive, — there he stands, and such a master, too; Martin Petrovitch! And all of a sudden he won't be their owner. . . . A queer thing!" I don't know whether Harlov had an inkling of the notions that were straying through his "subjects'" heads, or whether he wanted to display his power for the last time, but he suddenly opened the little window, stuck his head out, and shouted in a voice of thunder, "obedience!" Then he slammed-to the window. The peasants' bewilderment was certainly not dispelled nor decreased by this proceeding. They became stonier than ever, and even seemed to cease looking at anything. The group of house-serfs (among them were two sturdy wenches, in short chintz gowns, with muscles such as one might perhaps match in Michael Angelo's "Last Judg-

ment," and one utterly decrepit old man, hoary with age and half blind, in a threadbare frieze cloak, rumoured to have been "cornet-player" in the days of Potemkin, — the page Maximka, Harlov had reserved for himself) this group showed more life than the peasants; at least, it moved restlessly about. The new mistresses themselves were very dignified in their attitude, especially Anna. Her thin lips tightly compressed, she looked obstinately down . . . her stern figure augured little good to the house-serfs. Evlampia, too, did not raise her eyes; only once she turned round and deliberately, as it were with surprise, scanned her betrothed, Zhitkov, who had thought fit, following Sletkin, to come out, too, on to the steps. "What business have you here?" those handsome prominent eyes seemed to demand. Sletkin was the most changed of all. A bustling cheeriness showed itself in his whole bearing, as though he were overtaken by hunger; the movements of his head and his legs were as obsequious as ever, but how gleefully he kept working his arms, how fussily he twitched his shoulder-blades. "Arrived at last!" he seemed to say. Having finished the ceremony of the entrance into possession, the police captain, whose mouth was literally watering at the prospect of lunch, rubbed his hands in that peculiar manner which usually precedes the tossing-off of the first glass of spirits. But it appeared that Martin Petrovitch wished first to have a service performed with sprinklings of holy water. The priest put on an ancient and decrepit chasuble; a decrepit deacon came out of the kitchen, with difficulty kindling the incense in an old brazen church-vessel. The service began. Harlov sighed continually; he was unable, owing to his corpulence, to bow to the ground, but crossing himself with his right hand and bending his head, he pointed with the forefinger of his left hand to the floor. Sletkin positively beamed and even shed tears. Zhitkov, with dignity, in martial fashion, flourished his fingers only slightly between the third and fourth button of his uniform. Kvitsinsky, as a Catholic, remained in the next room. But the attorney prayed so fervently, sighed so sympathetically after Martin Petrovitch, and so persistently muttered and chewed his lips, turning his eyes upwards, that I felt moved, as I looked at him, and began to pray fervently too. At the conclusion of the service and the sprinkling with holy water, during which every one present, even the blind cornet-player, the contemporary of Potemkin, even Kvitsinsky, moistened their eyes with holy water, Anna and Evlampia once more, at Martin Petrovitch's bidding, prostrated themselves to the ground to thank him. Then at last came the moment of lunch. There were a great many dishes and all very nice; we all ate terribly much. The inevitable bottle of Don wine made its appearance. The police captain, who was of all of us the most familiar with the usages of the world, and besides, the representative of government, was the first to propose the toast to the health "of the fair proprietresses!" Then he proposed we should drink to the health of our most honoured and most generous-hearted friend, Martin Petrovitch. At

the words "most generous-hearted," Sletkin uttered a shrill little cry and ran to kiss his benefactor. . . . "There, that'll do, that'll do," muttered Harlov, as it were with annoyance, keeping him off with his elbow . . . But at this point a not quite pleasant, as they say, incident took place.

XIV

Souvenir, who had been drinking continuously ever since the beginning of luncheon, suddenly got up from his chair as red as a beetroot, and pointing his finger at Martin Petrovitch, went off into his mawkish, paltry laugh.

"Generous-hearted! Generous-hearted!" he began croaking; "but we shall see whether this generosity will be much to his taste when he's stripped naked, the servant of God . . . and out in the snow, too!"

"What rot are you talking, fool?" said Harlov contemptuously.

"Fool! fool!" repeated Souvenir. "God Almighty alone knows which of us is the real fool. But you, brother, did my sister, your wife, to her death, and now you've done for yourself . . . ha-ha-ha!"

"How dare you insult our honoured benefactor?" Sletkin began shrilly, and, tearing himself away from Martin Petrovitch, whose shoulder he had clutched, he flew at Souvenir. "But let me tell you, if our benefactor desires it, we can cancel the deed this very minute!"

"And yet, you'll strip him naked, and turn him out into the snow . . ." returned Souvenir, retreating behind Kvitsinsky.

"Silence!" thundered Harlov. "I'll pound you into a jelly! And you hold your tongue too, puppy!" he turned to Sletkin; "don't put in your word where you're not wanted! If I, Martin Petrovitch Harlov, have decided to make a deed of partition, who can cancel the same act against my will? Why, in the whole world there is no power." . . .

"Martin Petrovitch!" the attorney began in a mellow bass — he too had drunk a good deal, but his dignity was only increased thereby — "but how if the gentleman has spoken the truth? You have done a generous action, to be sure; but how if — God forbid — in reality in place of fitting gratitude, some affront come of it?"

I stole a glance at both Martin Petrovitch's daughters. Anna's eyes were simply pinned upon the speaker, and a face more spiteful, more snake-like, and more beautiful in its very spite I had certainly never seen! Evlampia sat turned away, with her arms folded. A smile more scornful than ever curved her full, rosy lips.

Harlov got up from his chair, opened his mouth, but apparently his tongue failed him. . . . He suddenly brought his fist down on the table, so that everything in the room danced and rang.

"Father," Anna said hurriedly, "they do not know us, and that is why they judge of us so. But don't, please, make yourself ill. You are angered for nothing, indeed; see, your face is, as it were, twisted awry."

Harlov looked towards Evlampia; she did not stir, though Zhitkov, sitting beside her, gave her a poke in the side.

"Thank you, my daughter Anna," said Harlov huskily; "you are a sensible girl; I rely upon you and on your husband too." Sletkin once more gave vent to a shrill little sound; Zhitkov expanded his chest and gave a little scrape with his foot; but Harlov did not observe his efforts. "This dolt," he went on, with a motion of his chin in the direction of Souvenir, "is pleased to get a chance to teaze me; but you, my dear sir," he addressed himself to the attorney, "it is not for you to pass judgment on Martin Harlov; that is something beyond you. Though you are a man in official position, your words are most foolish. Besides, the deed is done, there will be no going back from my determination. . . . Now, I will wish you good-day, I am going away. I am no longer the master of this house, but a guest in it. Anna, do you do your best; but I will go to my own room. Enough!"

Martin Petrovitch turned his back on us, and, without adding another word, walked deliberately out of the room.

This sudden withdrawal on the part of our host could not but break up the party, especially as the two hostesses also vanished not long after. Sletkin vainly tried to keep us. The police captain did not fail to blame the attorney for his uncalled-for candour. "Couldn't help it!" the latter responded. . . . "My conscience spoke."

"There, you see that he's a mason," Souvenir whispered to me.

"Conscience!" retorted the police captain. "We know all about your conscience! I suppose it's in your pocket, just the same as it is with us sinners!"

The priest, meanwhile, even though already on his feet, foreseeing the speedy termination of the repast, lifted mouthful after mouthful to his mouth without a pause.

"You've got a fine appetite, I see," Sletkin observed to him sharply.

"Storing up for the future," the priest responded with a meek grimace; years of hunger were expressed in that reply.

The carriages rattled up . . . and we separated. On the way home, no one hindered Souvenir's chatter and silly tricks, as Kvitsinsky had announced that he was sick of all this "wholly superfluous" unpleasantness, and had set off home before us on foot. In his place, Zhitkov took a seat in our coach. The retired major wore a most dissatisfied expression, and kept twitching his moustaches like a spider.

"Well, your noble Excellency," lisped Souvenir, "is subordination exploded, eh? Wait a bit and see what will happen! They'll give you the sack too. Ah, a poor bridegroom you are, a poor bridegroom, an unlucky bridegroom!"

Souvenir was positively beside himself; while poor Zhitkov could do nothing but twitch his moustaches.

When I got home I told my mother all I had seen. She heard me to the end, and shook her head several times. "It's a bad business," was her comment. "I don't like all these innovations!"

XV

NEXT day Martin Petrovitch came to dinner. My mother congratulated him on the successful conclusion of his project. "You are now a free man," she said, "and ought to feel more at ease."

"More at ease, to be sure, madam," answered Martin Petrovitch, by no means, however, showing in the expression of his face that he really was more at ease. "Now I can meditate upon my soul, and make ready for my last hour, as I ought."

"Well," queried my mother, "and do the shooting pains still tingle in your arms?"

Harlov twice clenched and unclenched his left arm. "They do, madam; and I've something else to tell you. As I begin to drop asleep, some one cries in my head, 'Take care! Take care!'"

"That's nerves," observed my mother, and she began speaking of the previous day, and referred to certain circumstances which had attended the completion of the deed of partition. . . .

"To be sure, to be sure," Harlov interrupted her, "there was something of the sort . . . of no consequence. Only there's something I would tell you," he added, hesitating — "I was not disturbed yesterday by Souvenir's silly words — even Mr. Attorney, though he's no fool — even he did not trouble me; no, it was quite another person disturbed me ——" Here Harlov faltered.

"Who?" asked my mother.

Harlov fastened his eyes upon her: "Evlampia!"

"Evlampia? Your daughter? How was that?"

"Upon my word, madam, she was like a stone! nothing but a statue! Can it be she has no feeling? Her sister, Anna — well, she was all she should be. She's a keen-witted creature! But Evlampia — why, I'd shown her — I must own — so much partiality! Can it be she's no feeling for me! It's clear I'm in a bad way; it's clear I've a feeling that I'm not long for this world, since I make over everything to them; and yet she's like a stone! she might at least utter a sound! Bows — yes, she bows, but there's no thankfulness to be seen."

"There, give over," observed my mother, "we'll marry her to Gavrila Fedulitch . . . she'll soon get softer in his hands."

Martin Petrovitch once more looked from under his brows at my mother. "Well, there's Gavrila Fedulitch, to be sure! You have confidence in him, then, madam?"

"I've confidence in him."

"Very well; you should know best, to be sure. But Evlampia, let me tell you, is like me. The character is just the same. She has the wild Cossack blood, and her heart's like a burning coal!"

"Why, do you mean to tell me you've a heart like that, my dear sir?"

Harlov made no answer. A brief silence followed.

"What are you going to do, Martin Petrovitch," my mother began, "in what way do you mean to set about saving your soul now? Will you set off to Mitrophan or to Kiev, or maybe you'll go to the Optin desert, as it's in the neighbourhood? There, they do say, there's a holy monk appeared . . . Father Makary they call him, no one remembers any one like him! He sees right through all sins."

"If she really turns out an ungrateful daughter," Harlov enunciated in a husky voice, "then it would be better for me, I believe, to kill her with my own hands!"

"What are you saying! Lord, have mercy on you!" cried my mother. "Think what you're saying! There, see, what a pretty pass it's come to. You should have listened to me the other day when you came to consult me! Now, here, you'll go tormenting yourself, instead of thinking of your soul! You'll be tormenting yourself, and all to no purpose! Yes! Here you're complaining now, and faint-hearted . . ."

This reproach seemed to stab Harlov to the heart. All his old pride came back to him with a rush. He shook himself, and thrust out his chin. "I am not a man, madam, Natalia Nikolaevna, to complain or be faint-hearted," he began sullenly. "I simply wished to reveal my feelings to you as my benefactress and a person I respect. But the Lord God knows (here he raised his hand high above his head) that this globe of earth may crumble to pieces before I will go back from my word, or . . . (here he positively snorted) show a faint heart, or regret what I have done! I had good reasons, be sure! My daughters will never forget their duty, for ever and ever, amen!"

My mother stopped her ears. "What's this for, my good sir, like a trumpet-blast! If you really have such faith in your family, well, praise the Lord for it! You've quite put my brains in a whirl!"

Martin Petrovitch begged pardon, sighed twice, and was silent. My mother once more referred to Kiev, the Optin desert, and Father Makary. . . . Harlov assented, said that "he must . . . he must . . . he would have to . . . his soul" . . . and that was all. He did not regain his cheerfulness before he went away. From time to time he clenched and unclenched his fist, looked at his open hand, said that what he feared above everything was dying without repentence, from a stroke, and that he had made a vow to himself not to get angry, as anger vitiated his blood and drove it to head. . . . Besides, he had now withdrawn from everything. What grounds could he have for getting angry? Let other people trouble themselves now and vitiate their blood!

As he took leave of my mother he looked at her in a strange way, mournfully and questioningly . . . and suddenly, with a rapid movement, drew out of his pocket the volume of *The Worker's Leisure-Hour*, and thrust it into my mother's hand.

"What's that?" she inquired.

"Read . . . here," he said hurriedly, "where the corner's turned down, about death. It seems to me, it's terribly well said, but I can't make it out at all. Can't you explain it to me, my benefactress? I'll come back again and you explain it me."

With these words Martin Petrovitch went away.

"He's in a bad way, he's in a bad way," observed my mother, directly he had disappeared through the doorway, and she set to work upon the *Leisure-Hour*. On the page turned down by Harlov were the following words:

"Death is a grand and solemn work of nature. It is nothing else than that the spirit, inasmuch as it is lighter, finer, and infinitely more penetrating than those elements under whose sway it has been subject, nay, even than the force of electricity itself, so is chemically purified and striveth upward till what time it attaineth an equally spiritual abiding-place for itself . . ." and so on.

My mother read this passage through twice, and exclaiming, "Pooh!" she flung the book away.

Three days later, she received the news that her sister's husband was dead, and set off to her sister's country-seat, taking me with her. My mother proposed to spend a month with her, but she stayed on till late in the autumn, and it was only at the end of September that we returned to our own estate.

XVI

The first news with which my valet, Prokofy, greeted me (he regarded himself as the seignorial huntsman) was that there was an immense number of wild snipe on the wing, and that in the birch-copse near Eskovo (Harlov's property), especially, they were simply swarming. I had three hours before me till dinner-time. I promptly seized my gun and my game-bag, and with Prokofy and a setter-dog, hastened to the Eskovo copse. We certainly did find a great many wild snipe there, and, firing about thirty charges, killed five. As I hurried homewards with my booty, I saw a peasant ploughing near the road-side. His horse had stopped, and with tearful and angry abuse he was mercilessly tugging with the cord reins at the animal's head, which was bent on one side. I looked attentively at the luckless beast, whose ribs were all but through its skin, and, bathed in sweat, heaved up and down with convulsive, irregular movements like a blacksmith's bellows. I recognised it at once as the decrepit old mare,

with the scar on her shoulder, who had served Martin Petrovitch so many years.

"Is Mr. Harlov living?" I asked Prokofy. The chase had so completely absorbed us, that up to that instant we had not talked of anything.

"Yes, he's alive. Why?"

"But that's his mare, isn't it? Do you mean to say he's sold her?"

"His mare it is, to be sure; but as to selling, he never sold her. But they took her away from him, and handed her over to that peasant."

"How, took it? And he consented?"

"They never asked his consent. Things have changed here in your absence," Prokofy observed, with a faint smile in response to my look of amazement; "worse luck! My goodness, yes! Now Sletkin's master, and orders every one about."

"But Martin Petrovitch?"

"Why, Martin Petrovitch has become the very last person here, you may say. He's on bread and water, — what more can one say? They've crushed him altogether. Mark my words; they'll drive him out of the house."

The idea that it was possible to *drive* such a giant had never entered my head. "And what does Zhitkov say to it?" I asked at last. "I suppose he's married to the second daughter?"

"Married?" repeated Prokofy, and this time he grinned all over his face. "They won't let him into the house. 'We don't want you,' they say; 'get along home with you.' It's as I said; Sletkin directs every one."

"But what does the young lady say?"

"Evlampia Martinovna? Ah, master, I could tell you . . . but you're young — one must think of that. Things are going on here that are . . . oh! . . . oh! . . . oh! Hey! why Dianka's setting, I do believe!"

My dog actually had stopped short, before a thick oak bush which bordered a narrow ravine by the roadside. Prokofy and I ran up to the dog; a snipe flew up out of the bush, we both fired at it and missed; the snipe settled in another place; we followed it.

The soup was already on the table when I got back. My mother scolded me. "What's the meaning of it?" she said with displeasure; "the very first day, and you keep us waiting for dinner." I brought her the wild snipe I had killed; she did not even look at them. There were also in the room Souvenir, Kvitsinsky, and Zhitkov. The retired major was huddled in a corner, for all the world like a schoolboy in disgrace. His face wore an expression of mingled confusion and annoyance; his eyes were red . . . One might positively have imagined he had recently been in tears. My mother remained in an ill humour. I was at no great pains to surmise that my late arrival did not count for much in it. During dinner-time she hardly talked at all. The major turned beseeching glances upon her from time to time, but ate a good dinner nevertheless. Souvenir was all of a shake. Kvitsinsky preserved his habitual self-confidence of demeanour.

"Vikenty Osipitch," my mother addressed him, "I beg you to send a carriage to-morrow for Martin Petrovitch, since it has come to my knowledge that he has none of his own. And bid them tell him to come without fail, that I desire to see him."

Kvitsinsky was about to make some rejoinder, but he restrained himself.

"And let Sletkin know," continued my mother, "that I command him to present himself before me . . . Do you hear? I com . . . mand!"

"Yes, just so . . . that scoundrel ought —— " Zhitkov was beginning in a subdued voice; but my mother gave him such a contemptuous look, that he promptly turned away and was silent.

"Do you hear? I command!" repeated my mother.

"Certainly, madam," Kvitsinsky replied submissively but with dignity.

"Martin Petrovitch won't come!" Souvenir whispered to me, as he came out of the dining-room with me after dinner. "You should just see what's happened to him! It's past comprehension! It's come to this, that whatever they say to him, he doesn't understand a word! Yes! They've got the snake under the pitchfork!"

And Souvenir went off into his revolting laugh.

XVII

Souvenir's prediction turned out correct. Martin Petrovitch would not come to my mother. She was not at all pleased with this, and despatched a letter to him. He sent her a square bit of paper, on which the following words were written in big letters: "Indeed I can't. I should die of shame. Let me go to my ruin. Thanks. Don't torture me. — Martin Harlov." Sletkin did come, but not on the day on which my mother had "commanded" his attendance, but twenty-four hours later. My mother gave orders that he should be shown into her boudoir. . . . God knows what their interview was about, but it did not last long; a quarter of an hour, not more. Sletkin came out of my mother's room, crimson all over, and with such a viciously spiteful and insolent expression of face, that, meeting him in the drawing-room, I was simply petrified, while Souvenir, who was hanging about there, stopped short in the middle of a snigger. My mother came out of her boudoir, also very red in the face, and announced, in the hearing of all, that Mr. Sletkin was never, upon any pretext, to be admitted to her presence again, and that if Martin Petrovitch's daughters were to make bold — they've impudence enough, said she — to present themselves, they, too, were to be refused admittance. At dinner-time she suddenly exclaimed "The vile little Jew! I picked him out of the gutter, I made him a career, he owes everything, everything to me, — and he dares to tell me I've no business to meddle in their affairs! that Martin Petrovitch is full of whims and fancies, and it's impossible to humor him! Humour him, indeed! What a thing to say! Ah, he's an ungrateful wretch! An insolent little Jew!"

Major Zhitkov, who happened to be one of the company at dinner, imagined that now it was no less than the will of the Almighty for him to seize the opportunity and put in his word . . . but my mother promptly settled him. "Well, and you're a fine one, too, my man!" she commented. "Couldn't get the upper hand of a girl, and he an officer! In command of a squadron! I can fancy how it obeyed you! He take a steward's place indeed! a fine steward he'd make!"

Kvitsinsky, who was sitting at the end of the table, smiled to himself a little malignantly, while poor Zhitkov could do nothing but twitch his moustaches, lift his eyebrows, and bury the whole of his hirsute countenance in his napkin.

After dinner, he went out onto the steps to smoke his pipe as usual, and he struck me as so miserable and forlorn, that, although I had never liked him, I joined myself on to him at once.

"How was it, Gavrila Fedulitch," I began without further beating about the bush, "that your affair with Evlampia Martinovna was broken off? I'd expected you to be married long ago."

The retired major looked at me dejectedly.

"A snake in the grass," he began, uttering each letter of each syllable with bitter distinctness, "has poisoned me with his fang, and turned all my hopes in life to ashes. And I could tell you, Dmitri Semyonovitch, all his hellish wiles, but I'm afraid of angering your mamma. ("You're young yet" — Prokofy's expression flashed across my mind.) "Even as it is" — Zhitkov groaned.

"Patience . . . patience . . . nothing else is left me. (He struck his fist upon his chest.) Patience, old soldier, patience. I served the Tsar faithfully . . . honourably . . . yes. I spared neither blood nor sweat, and now see what I am brought to. Had it been in the regiment — and the matter depending upon me," he continued after a short silence, spent in convulsively sucking at his cherrywood pipe, "I'd have . . . I'd have given it him with the flat side of my sword . . . three times over . . . till he'd had enough . . ."

Zhitkov took the pipe out of his mouth, and fixed his eyes on vacancy, as though admiring the picture he had conjured up.

Souvenir ran up, and began quizzing the major. I turned away from them, and determined, come what may, I would see Martin Petrovitch with my own eyes. . . . My boyish curiosity was greatly stirred.

XVIII

Next day I set out with my gun and dog, but without Prokofy, to the Eskovo copse. It was an exquisite day; I fancy there are no days like that in September anywhere but in Russia. The stillness was such that one could hear, a hundred paces off, the squirrel hopping over the dry

leaves, and the broken twig just feebly catching at the other branches, and falling, at last, on the soft grass — to lie there for ever, not to stir again till it rotted away. The air, neither warm nor chill, but only fragrant, and as it were keen, was faintly, deliciously stinging in my eyes and on my cheeks. A long spider-web, delicate as a silken thread, with a white ball in the middle, floated smoothly in the air, and sticking to the butt-end of my gun, stretched straight out in the air — a sign of settled and warm weather. The sun shone with a brightness as soft as moonlight. Wild snipe were to be met with pretty often; but I did not pay special attention to them. I knew that the copse went on almost to Harlov's homestead, right up to the hedge of his garden, and I turned my steps in that direction, though I could not even imagine how I should get into the place itself, and was even doubtful whether I ought to try to do so, as my mother was so angry with its new owners. Sounds of life and humanity reached me from no great distance. I listened. . . . Some one was coming through the copse . . . straight towards me.

"You should have said so straight out, dear," I heard a woman's voice.

"Be reasonable," another voice broke in, the voice of a man. "Can one do it all at once?"

I knew the voices. There was the gleam of a woman's blue gown through the reddening nut bushes. Beside it stood a dark full coat. Another instant — and there stepped out into the glade, five paces from me, Sletkin and Evlampia.

They were disconcerted at once. Evlampia promptly stepped back, away into the bushes. Sletkin thought a little, and came up to me. There was not a trace to be seen in his face of the obsequious meekness, with which he had paced up and down Harlov's courtyard, four months before, rubbing up my horse's snaffle. But neither could I perceive in it the insolent defiance, which had so struck me on the previous day, on the threshold of my mother's boudoir. It was still as white and pretty as ever, but seemed broader and more solid.

"Well, have you shot many snipe?" he asked me, raising his cap, smiling, and passing his hand over his black curls; "you are shooting in our copse. . . . You are very welcome. We would not hinder you. . . . Quite the contrary."

"I have killed nothing to-day," I rejoined, answering his first question; "and I will go out of your copse this instant."

Sletkin hurriedly put on his cap. "Indeed, why so? We would not drive you out — indeed, we're delighted. . . . Here's Evlampia Martinovna will say the same. Evlampia Martinovna, come here. Where have you hidden yourself?" Evlampia's head appeared behind the bushes. But she did not come up to us. She had grown prettier, and seemed taller and bigger than ever.

"I'm very glad, to tell the truth," Sletkin went on, "that I have met you. Though you are still young in years, you have plenty of good sense already. Your mother was pleased to be very angry with me yesterday — she would not listen to reason of any sort from me, but I declare, as before God, so before you now, I am not to blame in any way. We can't treat Martin Petrovitch otherwise than we do; he's fallen into complete dotage. One can't humour all his whims, really. But we show him all due respect. Only ask Evlampia Martinovna."

Evlampia did not stir; her habitual scornful smile flickered about her lips, and her large eyes watched us with no friendly expression.

"But why, Vladimir Vassilitch, have you sold Martin Petrovitch's mare?" (I was particularly impressed by that mare being in the possession of a peasant.)

"His mare, why did we sell it? Why, Lord have mercy on us — what use was she? She was simply eating her head off. But with the peasant she can work at the plough anyway. As for Martin Petrovitch, if he takes a fancy to drive out anywhere, he's only to ask us. We wouldn't refuse him a conveyance. On a holiday, we should be pleased."

"Vladimir Vassilitch," said Evlampia huskily, as though calling him away, and she still did not stir from her place. She was twisting some stalks of ripple grass round her fingers and snapping off their heads, slapping them against each other.

"About the page Maximka again," Sletkin went on, "Martin Petrovitch complains because we've taken him away and apprenticed him. But kindly consider the matter for yourself. Why, what had he to do waiting on Martin Petrovitch? Kick up his heels; nothing more. And he couldn't even wait on him properly; on account of his stupidity and his youth. Now we have sent him away to a harness-maker's. He'll be turned into a first-rate handicraftsman — and make a good thing of it for himself — and pay us ransom-money too. And, living in a small way as we do, that's a matter of importance. On a little farm like ours, one can't afford to let anything slip."

"And this is the man Martin Petrovitch called a 'poor stick,'" I thought. "But who reads to Martin Petrovitch now?" I asked.

"Why, what is there to read? He had one book — but, luckily, that's been mislaid somewhere. . . . And what use is reading at his age?"

"And who shaves him?" I asked again.

Sletkin gave an approving laugh, as though in response to an amusing joke. "Why, nobody. At first he used to singe his beard in the candle — but now he lets it be altogether. And it's lovely!"

"Vladimir Vassilitch!" Evlampia repeated insistently: "Vladimir Vassilitch!"

Sletkin made her a sign with his hand.

"Martin Petrovitch is clothed and cared for, and eats what we do.

What more does he want? He declared himself that he wanted nothing more in this world but to think of his soul. If only he would realise that everything now, however you look at it, is ours. He says too that we don't pay him his allowance. But we've not always got money ourselves; and what does he want with it, when he has everything provided him? And we treat him as one of the family too. I'm telling you the truth. The rooms, for instance, which he occupies — how we need them! there's simply not room to turn round without them; but we don't say a word — we put up with it. We even think how to provide amusement for him. There, on St. Peter's Day, I bought him some excellent hooks in the town — real English ones, expensive hooks, to catch fish. There are lots of carp in our pond. Let him sit and fish; in an hour or two, there'd be a nice little fish soup provided. The most suitable occupation for old men."

"Vladimir Vassilitch!" Evlampia called for the third time in an incisive tone, and she flung far away from her the grass she had been twisting in her fingers, "I am going!" Her eyes met mine. "I am going, Vladimir Vassilitch!" she repeated, and vanished behind a bush.

"I'm coming, Evlampia Martinovna, directly!" shouted Sletkin. "Martin Petrovitch himself agrees with us now," he went on, turning again to me. "At first he was offended, certainly, and even grumbled, until, you know, he realised; he was, you remember, a hot-tempered violent man — more's the pity! but there, he's grown quite meek now. Because he sees his own interest. Your mamma — mercy on us! how she pitched into me! . . . To be sure: she's a lady that sets as much store by her own authority as Martin Petrovitch used to do. But you come in and see for yourself. And you might put in a word when there's an opportunity. I feel Natalia Nikolaevna's bounty to me deeply. But we've got to live too."

"And how was it Zhitkov was refused?" I asked.

"Fedulitch? That dolt?" Sletkin shrugged his shoulders. "Why, upon my word, what use could he have been? His whole life spent among soldiers — and now he has a fancy to take up farming. He can keep the peasants up to the mark, says he, because he's been used to knocking men about. He can do nothing; even knocking men about wants some sense. Evlampia Martinovna refused him herself. He was a quite unsuitable person. All our farming would have gone to ruin with him!"

"Coo—y!" sounded Evlampia's musical voice.

"Coming! coming!" Sletkin called back. He held out his hand to me. Though unwillingly, I took it.

"I beg to take leave, Dmitri Semyonovitch," said Sletkin, showing all his white teeth. "Shoot wild snipe as much as you like. It's wild game, belonging to no one. But if you come across a hare — you spare it; that game is ours. Oh, and something else! won't you be having pups from your bitch? I should be obliged for one!"

"Coo—y!" Evlampia's voice rang out again.
"Coo—y!" Sletkin responded, and rushed into the bushes.

XIX

I REMEMBER, when I was left alone, I was absorbed in wondering how it was Harlov had not pounded Sletkin "into a jelly," as he said, and how it was Sletkin had not been afraid of such a fate. It was clear Martin Petrovitch really had grown "meek," I thought, and I had a still stronger desire to make my way into Eskovo, and get at least a glance at that colossus, whom I could never picture to myself subdued and tractable. I had reached the edge of the copse, when suddenly a big snipe, with a great rush of wings, darted up at my very feet, and flew off into the depths of the wood. I took aim; my gun missed fire. I was greatly annoyed; it had been such a fine bird, and I made up my mind to try if I couldn't make it rise a second time. I set off in the direction of its flight, and going some two hundred paces off into the wood I caught sight — in a little glade, under an overhanging birch-tree — not of the snipe, but of the same Sletkin once more. He was lying on his back, with both hands under his head, and with a smile of contentment gazing upwards at the sky, swinging his left leg, which was crossed over his right knee. He did not notice my approach. A few paces from him, Evlampia was walking slowly up and down the little glade, with downcast eyes. It seemed as though she were looking for something in the grass — mushrooms or something; now and then, she stooped and stretched out her hand. She was singing in a low voice. I stopped at once, and fell to listening. At first I could not make out what it was she was singing, but afterwards I recognised clearly the following well-known lines of the old ballad:

"Hither, hither, threatening storm-cloud,
Slay for me the father-in-law,
Strike for me the mother-in-law,
The young wife I will kill myself!"

Evlampia sang louder and louder; the last words she delivered with peculiar energy. Sletkin still lay on his back and laughed to himself, while she seemed all the time to be moving round and round him.

"Oh, indeed!" he commented at last. "The things that come into some people's heads!"

"What?" queried Evlampia.

Sletkin raised his head a little. "What? Why, what words were those you were uttering?"

"Why, you know, Volodya, one can't leave the words out of a song," answered Evlampia, and she turned and saw me. We both cried out aloud at once, and both rushed away in opposite directions.

I made my way hurriedly out of the copse, and crossing a narrow clearing, found myself facing Harlov's garden.

XX

I HAD no time, nor would it have been of any use, to deliberate over what I had seen. Only an expression kept recurring to my mind, "love spell," which I had lately heard, and over the signification of which I had pondered a good deal. I walked alongside the garden fence, and in a few moments, behind the silver poplars (they had not yet lost a single leaf, and the foliage was luxuriantly thick and brilliantly glistening), I saw the yard and two little lodges of Martin Petrovitch's homestead. The whole place struck me as having been tidied up and pulled into shape. On every side one could perceive traces of unflagging and severe supervision. Anna Martinovna came out on to the steps, and screwing up her blue-grey eyes, gazed for a long while in the direction of the copse.

"Have you seen the master?" she asked a peasant, who was walking across the yard.

"Vladimir Vassilitch?" responded the latter, taking his cap off. "He went into the copse, surely."

"I know, he went to the copse. Hasn't he come back? Haven't you seen him?"

"I've not seen him . . . nay."

The peasant continued standing bareheaded before Anna Martinovna.

"Well, you can go," she said. "Or no —— wait a bit —— where's Martin Petrovitch? Do you know?"

"Oh, Martin Petrovitch," answered the peasant, in a sing-song voice, alternately lifting his right and then his left hand, as though pointing away somewhere, "is sitting yonder, at the pond, with a fishing-rod. He's sitting in the reeds, with a rod. Catching fish, maybe, God knows."

"Very well. . . . you can go," repeated Anna Martinovna; "and put away that wheel, it's lying about."

The peasant ran to carry out her command, while she remained standing a few minutes longer on the steps, still gazing in the direction of the copse. Then she clenched one fist menacingly, and went slowly back into the house. "Axiutka!" I heard her imperious voice calling within.

Anna Martinovna looked angry, and tightened her lips, thin enough at all times, with a sort of special energy. She was carelessly dressed, and a coil of loose hair had fallen down on to her shoulder. But in spite of the negligence of her attire, and her irritable humour, she struck me, just as before, as attractive, and I should have been delighted to kiss the narrow hand which looked malignant too, as she twice irritably pushed back the loose tress.

XXI

"Can Martin Petrovitch have really taken to fishing?" I asked myself, as I turned towards the pond, which was on one side of the garden. I got on to the dam, looked in all directions. . . . Martin Petrovitch was nowhere to be seen. I bent my steps along one of the banks of the pond, and at last, at the very top of it, in a little creek, in the midst of flat broken-down stalks of reddish reed, I caught sight of a huge greyish mass. . . . I looked intently: it was Harlov. Bareheaded, unkempt, in a cotton smock torn at the seams, with his legs crossed under him, he was sitting motionless on the bare earth. So motionless was he that a sandpiper, at my approach, darted up from the dry mud a couple of paces from him, and flew with a flash of its little wings and a whistle over the surface of the water, showing that no one had moved to frighten him for a long while. Harlov's whole appearance was so extraordinary that my dog stopped short directly it saw him, lifted its tail, and growled. He turned his head a very little, and fixed his wild-looking eyes on me and my dog. He was greatly changed by his beard, though it was short, but thick and curly, in white tufts, like Astrachan fur. In his right hand lay the end of a rod, while the other end hovered feebly over the water. I felt an involuntary pang at my heart. I plucked up my spirits, however, and went up to him, and wished him good morning. He slowly blinked as though just awake.

"What are you doing, Martin Petrovitch," I began, "catching fish here?"

"Yes . . . fish," he answered huskily, and pulled up the rod, on which there fluttered a piece of line, a fathom length, with no hook on it.

"Your tackle is broken off," I observed, and noticed the same moment that there was no sign of bait-tin nor worms near Martin Petrovitch. . . . And what sort of fishing could there be in September?

"Broken off?" he said, and he passed his hand over his face. "But it's all the same!"

He dropped the rod in again.

"Natalia Nikolaevna's son?" he asked me, after the lapse of two minutes, during which I had been gazing at him with secret bewilderment. Though he had grown terribly thinner, still he seemed a giant. But what rags he was dressed in, and how utterly he had gone to pieces altogether!

"Yes," I answered, "I'm the son of Natalia Nikolaevna B."

"Is she well?"

"My mother is quite well. She was very much hurt at your refusal," I added; "she did not at all expect you would not wish to come and see her."

Martin Petrovitch's head sank on his breast. "Have you been there?" he asked, with a motion of his head.

"Where?"

"There, at the house. Haven't you? Go! What is there for you to do here? Go! It's useless talking to me. I don't like it."

He was silent for a while.

"You'd like to be always idling about with a gun! In my young days I used to be inclined the same way too. Only my father was strict and made me respect him too. Mind you, very different from fathers now-a-days. My father flogged me with a horsewhip, and that was the end of it! I'd to give up idling about! And so I respected him. . . . Oo! . . . Yes! . . ."

Harlov paused again.

"Don't you stop here," he began again. "You go along to the house. Things are managed there now — it's first-rate. Volodka" . . . Here he faltered for a second. "Our Volodka's a good hand at everything. He's a fine fellow! yes, indeed, and a fine scoundrel too!"

I did not know what to say; Martin Petrovitch spoke very tranquilly.

"And you go and see my daughters. You remember, I daresay, I had daughters. They're managers too . . . clever ones. But I'm growing old, my lad; I'm on the shelf. Time to repose, you know. . . ."

"Nice sort of repose!" I thought, glancing round. "Martin Petrovitch!" I uttered aloud, "you really must come and see us."

Harlov looked at me. "Go along, my lad, I tell you."

"Don't hurt mamma's feelings; come and see us."

"Go away, my lad, go away," persisted Harlov. "What do you want to talk to me for?"

"If you have no carriage, mamma will send you hers."

"Go along!"

"But, really and truly, Martin Petrovitch!"

Harlov looked down again, and I fancied that his cheeks, dingy as though covered with earth, faintly flushed.

"Really, do come," I went on. "What's the use of your sitting here? of your making yourself miserable?"

"Making myself miserable?" he commented hesitatingly.

"Yes, to be sure — making yourself miserable!" I repeated.

Harlov said nothing, and seemed lost in musing. Emboldened by his silence, I determined to be open, to act straightforwardly, bluntly. (Do not forget, I was only fifteen then.)

"Martin Petrovitch!" I began, seating myself beside him. "I know everything, you see, positively everything. I know how your son-in-law is treating you — doubtless with the consent of your daughters. And now you are in such a position . . . But why lose heart?"

Harlov still remained silent, and simply dropped in his line; while I — what a sensible fellow, what a sage I felt!

"Doubtless," I began again, "you acted imprudently in giving up everything to your daughters. It was most generous on your part, and I am

not going to blame you. In our days it is a quality only too rare! But since your daughters are so ungrateful, you ought to show a contempt — yes, a contempt — for them . . . and not fret——"

"Stop!" muttered Harlov suddenly, gnashing his teeth, and his eyes, staring at the pond, glittered wrathfully . . . "Go away!"

"But, Martin Petrovitch——"

"Go away, I tell you, . . . or I'll kill you!"

I had come quite close to him; but at the last words I instinctively jumped up. "What did you say, Martin Petrovitch?"

"I'll kill you, I tell you; go away!" With a wild moan, a roar, the words broke from Harlov's breast, but he did not turn his head, and still stared wrathfully straight in front of him. "I'll take you and fling you and your fool's counsel into the water. You shall learn to pester the old, little milksop!"

"He's gone mad!" flashed through my mind.

I looked at him more attentively, and was completely petrified; Martin Petrovitch was weeping!! Tear after tear rolled from his eyelashes down his cheeks . . . while his face had assumed an expression utterly savage. . . .

"Go away!" he roared once more, "or I'll kill you, by God! for an example to others!"

He was shaking all over from side to side, and showing his teeth like a wild boar. I snatched up my gun and took to my heels. My dog flew after me, barking. He, too, was frightened.

When I got home, I naturally did not, by so much as a word, to my mother, hint at what I had seen; but coming across Souvenir, I told him — the devil knows why — all about it. That loathsome person was so delighted at my story, shrieking with laughter, and even dancing with pleasure, that I could hardly forbear striking him.

"Ah! I should like," he kept repeating, breathless with laughter, "to see that fiend, the Swede, Harlov, crawling into the mud and sitting in it. . . ."

"Go over to the pond if you're so curious."

"Yes; but how if he kills me?"

I felt horribly sick at Souvenir, and regretted my ill-timed confidence. . . . Zhitkov, to whom he repeated my tale, looked at the matter somewhat differently.

"We shall have to call in the police," he concluded, "or, maybe, we may have to send for a battalion of military."

His forebodings with regard to the military battalion did not come true; but something extraordinary really did happen.

XXII

In the middle of October, three weeks after my interview with Martin Petrovitch, I was standing at the window of my own room in the second storey of our house, and thinking of nothing at all, I looked disconsolately into the yard and the road that lay beyond it. The weather had been disgusting for the last five days. Shooting was not even to be thought of. All things living had hidden themselves; even the sparrows made no sound, and the rooks had long ago disappeared from sight. The wind howled drearily, then whistled spasmodically. The low-hanging sky, unbroken by one streak of light, had changed from an unpleasant whitish to a leaden and still more sinister hue; and the rain, which had been pouring and pouring, mercilessly and unceasingly, had suddenly become still more violent and more driving, and streamed with a rushing sound over the panes. The trees had been stripped utterly bare, and turned a sort of grey. It seemed they had nothing left to plunder; yet the wind would not be denied, but set to harassing them once more. Puddles, clogged with dead leaves, stood everywhere. Big bubbles, continually bursting and rising up again, leaped and glided over them. Along the roads, the mud lay thick and impassable. The cold pierced its way indoors through one's clothes to the very bones. An involuntary shiver passed over the body, and how sick one felt at heart! Sick, precisely, not sad. It seemed there would never again in the world be sunshine, nor brightness, nor colour, but this rain and mire and grey damp, and raw fog would last for ever, and for ever would the wind whine and moan! Well, I was standing moodily at my window, and I remember a sudden darkness came on — a bluish darkness — though the clock only pointed to twelve. Suddenly I fancied I saw a bear dash across our yard from the gates to the steps! Not on all-fours, certainly, but as he is depicted when he gets up on his hind-paws. I could not believe my eyes. If it were not a bear I had seen, it was, any way, something enormous, black, shaggy. . . . I was still lost in wonder as to what it could be, when suddenly I heard below a furious knocking. It seemed something utterly unlooked for, something terrible was stumbling headlong into our house. Then began a commotion, a hurrying to and fro. . . .

I quickly went down the stairs, ran into the dining-room. . . .

At the drawing-room door facing me stood my mother, as though rooted to the spot. Behind her, peered several scared female faces. The butler, two footmen, and a page, with his mouth wide open with astonishment, were packed together in the doorway of the hall. In the middle of the dining-room, covered with mire, dishevelled, tattered, and soaking wet — so wet that steam rose all round and water was running in little streams over the floor — knelt, shaking ponderously, as it were, at the last gasp . . . the very monster I had seen dashing

across the yard! And who was this monster? Harlov! I came up on one side, and saw, not his face, but his head, which he was clutching, with both hands in the hair that blinded him with filth. He was breathing heavily, brokenly; something positively rattled in his throat — and in all the bespattered dark mass, the only thing that could be clearly distinguished was the tiny whites of the eyes, straying wildly about. He was awful! The dignitary came into my mind whom he had once crushed for comparing him to a mastodon. Truly, so might have looked some antediluvian creature that had just escaped another more powerful monster, attacking it in the eternal slime of the primeval swamps.

"Martin Petrovitch!" my mother cried at last, and she clasped her hands. "Is that you? Good God! Merciful heavens!"

"I . . . I . . ." we heard a broken voice, which seemed with effort and painfully to dwell on each sound. "Alas! It is I!"

"But what has happened to you? Mercy upon us!"

"Natalia Nikolaev . . . na . . . I have . . . run straight . . . to you . . . from home . . . on foot." . . .

"Through such mud! But you don't look like a man. Get up; sit down, anyway. . . . And you," she turned to the maid-servants, "run quick for clothes. And haven't you some dry clothes?" she asked the butler.

The butler gesticulated as though to say, Is it likely for such a size? . . . "But we could get a coverlet," he replied, "or, there's a new horse-rug."

"But get up, get up, Martin Petrovitch, sit down," repeated my mother.

"They've turned me out, madam," Harlov moaned suddenly, and he flung his head back and stretched his hands out before him. "They've turned me out, Natalia Nikolaevna! My own daughters, out of my own home." . . .

My mother sighed and groaned.

"What are you saying? Turned you out! What wickedness! what wickedness!" (She crossed herself.) "But do get up, Martin Petrovitch, I beg you!"

Two maid-servants came in with cloths and stood still before Harlov. It was clear they did not know how to attack this mountain of filth. "They have turned me out, madam, they have turned me out!" Harlov kept repeating meanwhile. The butler returned with a large woollen coverlet, and he, too, stood still in perplexity. Souvenir's little head was thrust in at a door and vanished again.

"Martin Petrovitch! get up! Sit down! and tell me everything properly," my mother commanded in a tone of determination.

Harlov rose. . . . The butler tried to assist him but only dirtied his hand, and, shaking his fingers, retreated to the door. Staggering and faltering, Harlov got to a chair and sat down. The maids again approached him with their cloths, but he waved them off with his hand, and refused

the coverlet. My mother did not herself, indeed, insist; to dry Harlov was obviously out of the question; they contented themselves with hastily wiping up his traces on the floor.

XXIII

"How have they turned you out?" my mother asked, as soon as he had a little time to recover himself.

"Madam! Natalia Nikolaevna!" he began, in a strained voice, — and again I was struck by the uneasy straying of his eyes; "I will tell you the truth; I am myself most of all to blame."

"Ay, to be sure; you would not listen to me at the time," assented my mother, sinking into an arm-chair and slightly moving a scented handkerchief before her nose; very strong was the smell that came from Harlov . . . the odour in a forest bog is not so strong.

"Alas! that's not where I erred, madam, but through pride. Pride has been my ruin, as it ruined the Tsar Navuhodonosor. I fancied God had given me my full share of sense, and if I resolved on anything, it followed it was right; so . . . and then the fear of death came . . . I was utterly confounded! 'I'll show,' said I, 'to the last, my power and my strength! I'll bestow all on them, — and they must feel it all their lives. . . .'" (Harlov suddenly was shaking all over. . . .) "Like a mangy dog they have driven me out of the house! This is their gratitude!"

"In what way — ," my mother was beginning. . . .

"They took my page, Maximka, from me," Harlov interrupted her (his eyes were still wandering, he held both hands — the fingers interlaced — under his chin), "my carriage they took away, my monthly allowance they cut down, did not pay me the sum specified, cut me short all round, in fact; still I said nothing, bore it all! And I bore it by reason . . . alas! of my pride again. That my cruel enemies might not say, 'See, the old fool's sorry for it now'; and you too, do you remember, madam, had warned me; 'mind you, it's all to no purpose,' you said! and so I bore it. . . . Only, to-day I came into my room, and it was occupied already, and my bed they'd thrown out into the lumber-room! 'You can sleep there; we put up with you there even only out of charity; we've need of your room for the household.' And this was said to me by whom? Volodka Sletkin! the vile hound, the base cur!"

Harlov's voice broke.

"But your daughters? What did they do?" asked my mother.

"But I bore it all," Harlov went on again; "bitterness, bitterness was in my heart, let me tell you, and shame. . . . I could not bear to look upon the light of day! That was why I was unwilling to come and see you, ma'am, from this same feeling, from shame for my disgrace! I

have tried everything, my good friend; kindness, affection, and threats, and I reasoned with them, and more besides! I bowed down before them . . . like this." (Harlov showed how he had bowed down.) "And all in vain. And all of it I bore! At the beginning, at first, I'd very different thoughts; I'll up, I thought, and kill them. I'll crush them all, so that not a trace remains of them! . . . I'll let them know! Well, but after, I submitted! It's a cross, I thought, laid upon me; it's to bid me make ready for death. And all at once, to-day, driven out, like a cur! And by whom? Volodka! And you asked about my daughters; they've no will of their own at all. They're Volodka's slaves! Yes!"

My mother wondered. "In Anna's case I can understand that; she's a wife. . . . But how comes it your second . . ."

"Evlampia? She's worse than Anna! She's altogether given herself up into Volodka's hands. That's the reason she refused your soldier, too. At his, at Volodka's bidding. Anna, to be sure, ought to resent it, and she can't bear her sister, but she submits! He's bewitched them, the cursed scoundrel! Though she, Anna, I daresay, is pleased to think that Evlampia, who was always so proud, — and now see what she's come to! . . . O . . . alas . . . alas! God, my God!"

My mother looked uneasily towards me. I moved a little away as a precautionary measure, for fear I should be sent away altogether. . . .

"I am very sorry indeed, Martin Petrovitch," she began, "that my former protégé has caused you so much sorrow, and has turned out so badly. But I, too, was mistaken in him. . . . Who could have expected this of him?"

"Madam," Harlov moaned out, and he struck himself a blow on the chest, "I cannot bear the ingratitude of my daughters! I cannot, madam! You know I gave them everything, everything! And besides, my conscience has been tormenting me. Many things . . . alas! many things I have thought over, sitting by the pond, fishing. 'If you'd only done good to any one in your life!' was what I pondered upon, 'succoured the poor, set the peasants free, or something, to atone for having wrung their lives out of them. You must answer for them before God! Now their tears are revenged.' And what sort of life have they now? It was a deep pit even in my time — why disguise my sins? — but now there's no seeing the bottom! All these sins I have taken upon my soul; I have sacrificed my conscience for my children, and for this I'm laughed to scorn! Kicked out of the house, like a cur!"

"Don't think about that, Martin Petrovitch," observed my mother.

"And when he told me, your Volodka," Harlov went on with fresh force, "when he told me I was not to live in my room any more, — I laid every plank in that room with my own hands, — when he said that to me, — God only knows what passed within me! It was all confusion in my head, and like a knife in my heart. . . . Either to cut his throat or get away

out of the house! . . . So, I have run to you, my benefactress, Natalia Nikolaevna . . . where had I to lay my head? And then the rain, the filth . . . I fell down twenty times, maybe! And now . . . in such unseemly . . ."

Harlov scanned himself and moved restlessly in his chair, as though intending to get up.

"Say no more, Martin Petrovitch," my mother interposed hurriedly; "what does that signify? That you've made the floor dirty? That's no great matter! Come, I want to make you a proposition. Listen! They shall take you now to a special room, and make you up a clean bed, — you undress, wash, and lie down and sleep a little. . . ."

"Natalia Nikolaevna! There's no sleeping for me!" Harlov responded drearily. "It's as though there were hammers beating in my brain! Me! like some good-for-nothing beast! . . ."

"Lie down and sleep," my mother repeated insistently. "And then we'll give you some tea, — yes, and we'll have a talk. Don't lose heart, old friend! If they've driven you out of *your* house, in *my* house you will always find a home. . . . I have not forgotten, you know, that you saved my life."

"Benefactress!" moaned Harlov, and he covered his face with his hand. "*You* must save me now!"

This appeal touched my mother almost to tears. "I am ready and eager to help you, Martin Petrovitch, in everything I am able. But you must promise me that you will listen to me in future and dismiss every evil thought from you."

Harlov took his hands from his face. "If need be," he said, "I can forgive them, even!"

My mother nodded her head approvingly. "I am very glad to see you in such a truly Christian frame of mind, Martin Petrovitch; but we will talk of that later. Meanwhile, you put yourself to rights, and, most of all, sleep. Take Martin Petrovitch to what was the master's room, the green room," said my mother, addressing the butler, "and whatever he asks for, let him have it on the spot! Give orders for his clothes to be dried and washed, and ask the housekeeper for what linen is needed. Do you hear?"

"Yes, madam," responded the butler.

"And as soon as he's asleep, tell the tailor to take his measure; and his beard will have to be shaved. Not at once, but after."

"Yes, madam," repeated the butler. "Martin Petrovitch, kindly come." Harlov got up, looked at my mother, was about to go up to her, but stopped, swinging a bow from the waist, crossed himself three times to the image, and followed the steward. Behind him, I, too, slipped out of the room.

XXIV

The butler conducted Harlov to the green room, and at once ran off for the wardroom maid, as it turned out there were no sheets on the bed. Souvenir, who met us in the passage, and popped into the green room with us, promptly proceeded to dance, grinning and chuckling, round Harlov, who stood, his arms held a little away from him, and his legs apart, in the middle of the room, seeming lost in thought. The water was still dripping from him.

"The Swede! The Swede, Harlus!" piped Souvenir, doubling up and holding his sides. "Mighty founder of the illustrious race of Harlovs, look down on thy descendant! What does he look like? Dost thou recognise him? Ha, ha, ha! Your excellency, your hand, I beg; why, have you got on black gloves?"

I tried to restrain Souvenir, to put him to shame . . . but it was too late for that now.

"He called me parasite, toady! 'You've no roof,' said he, 'to call your own.' But now, no doubt about it, he's become as dependent as poor little me. Martin Petrovitch and Souvenir, the poor toady, are equal now. He'll have to live on charity too. They'll toss him the stale and dirty crust, that the dog has sniffed at and refused. . . . And they'll tell him to eat it, too. Ha, ha, ha!"

Harlov still stood motionless, his head drawn in, his legs and arms held a little apart.

"Martin Harlov, a nobleman born!" Souvenir went on shrieking. "What airs he used to give himself. Just look at me! Don't come near, or I'll knock you down! . . . And when he was so clever as to give away and divide his property, didn't he crow! 'Gratitude! . . . ' he cackled, 'gratitude!' But why were you so mean to me? Why didn't you make me a present? Maybe, I should have felt it more. And you see I was right when I said they'd strip you bare, and . . ."

"Souvenir!" I screamed; but Souvenir was in nowise daunted. Harlov still did not stir. It seemed as though he were only now beginning to be aware how soaking wet everything was that he had on, and was waiting to be helped off with his clothes. But the butler had not come back.

"And a military man too!" Souvenir began again. "In the year twelve, he saved his country; he showed proofs of his valour. I see how it is. Stripping the frozen marauders of their breeches is work he's quite equal to, but when the hussies stamp their feet at him he's frightened out of his skin."

"Souvenir!" I screamed a second time.

Harlov looked askance at Souvenir. Till that instant he seemed not to have noticed his presence, and only my exclamation aroused his attention.

"Look out, brother," he growled huskily, "don't dance yourself into trouble."

Souvenir fairly rolled about with laughter. "Ah, how you frighten me, most honoured brother. You're a formidable person, to be sure. You must comb your hair, at any rate, or, God forbid, it'll get dry, and you'll never wash it clean again; you'll have to mow it with a sickle." Souvenir all of a sudden got into a fury. "And you give yourself airs still. A poor outcast, and he gives himself airs. Where's your home now? you'd better tell me that, you were always boasting of it. 'I have a home of my own,' he used to say, 'but you're homeless.' 'My ancestral roof,' he would say." Souvenir pounced on this phrase as an inspiration.

"Mr. Bitchkov," I protested. "What are you about? you forget yourself."

But he still persisted in chattering, and still danced and pranced up and down quite close to Harlov. And still the butler and the wardroom maid did not come.

I felt alarmed. I began to notice that Harlov, who had, during his conversation with my mother, gradually grown quieter, and even towards the end apparently resigned himself to his fate, was beginning to get worked up again. He breathed more hurriedly, it seemed as though his face were suddenly swollen under his ears, his fingers twitched, his eyes again began moving restlessly in the dark mask of his grim face. . . .

"Souvenir, Souvenir!" I cried. "Stop it, I'll tell mamma."

But Souvenir seemed possessed by frenzy. "Yes, yes, most honoured brother," he began again, "here we find ourselves, you and I, in the most delicate position. While your daughters, with your son-in-law, Vladimir Vassilitch, are having a fine laugh at you under your roof. And you should at least curse them, as you promised. Even that you're not equal to. To be sure, how could you hold your own with Vladimir Vassilitch? Why, you used to call him Volodka, too. You call him Volodka. *He* is Vladimir Vassilitch, Mr. Sletkin, a landowner, a gentleman, while — what are you, pray?"

A furious roar drowned Souvenir's words. . . . Harlov was aroused. His fists were clenched and lifted, his face was purple, there was foam on his drawn lips, he was shaking with rage. "Roof, you say!" he thundered in his iron voice, "curse, you say . . . No! I will not curse them. . . . They don't care for that . . . But the roof . . . I will tear the roof off them, and they shall have no roof over their heads, like me. They shall learn to know Martin Harlov. My strength is not all gone yet; they shall learn to laugh at me! . . . They shall have no roof over their heads!"

I was stupefied; never in my life had I witnessed such boundless anger. Not a man — a wild beast — paced to and fro before me. I was stupefied . . . as for Souvenir, he had hidden under the table in his fright.

"They shall not!" Harlov shouted for the last time, and almost knocking over the butler and the wardroom maid, he rushed away out of the house. . . . He dashed headlong across the yard, and vanished through the gates.

XXV

My mother was terribly angry when the butler came with an abashed countenance to report Martin Petrovitch's sudden and unexpected retreat. He did not dare to conceal the cause of this retreat; I was obliged to confirm his story. "Then it was all your doing!" my mother cried, at the sight of Souvenir, who had run in like a hare, and was even approaching to kiss her hand: "Your vile tongue is to blame for it all!" "Excuse me, d'rectly, d'rectly . . ." faltered Souvenir, stuttering and drawing back his elbows behind him. "D'rectly, . . . d'rectly . . . I know your 'd'rectly,'" my mother repeated reprovingly, and she sent him out of the room. Then she rang the bell, sent for Kvitsinsky, and gave him orders to set off on the spot to Eskovo, with a carriage, to find Martin Petrovitch at all costs, and to bring him back. "Do not let me see you without him," she concluded. The gloomy Pole bowed his head without a word, and went away.

I went back to my own room, sat down again at the window, and I pondered a long while, I remember, on what had taken place before my eyes. I was puzzled; I could not understand how it was that Harlov, who had endured the insults of his own family almost without a murmur, had lost all self-control, and been unable to put up with the jeers and pin-pricks of such an abject creature as Souvenir. I did not understand in those days what insufferable bitterness there may sometimes be in a foolish taunt, even when it comes from lips one scorns. . . . The hated name of Sletkin, uttered by Souvenir, had been like a spark thrown into powder. The sore spot could not endure this final prick.

About an hour passed by. Our coach drove into the yard; but our steward sat in it alone. And my mother had said to him — "don't let me see you without him." Kvitsinsky jumped hurriedly out of the carriage, and ran up the steps. His face had a perturbed look — something very unusual with him. I promptly rushed downstairs, and followed at his heels into the drawing-room. "Well? have you brought him?" asked my mother.

"I have not brought him," answered Kvitsinsky — "and I could not bring him."

"How's that? Have you seen him?"

"Yes."

"What has happened to him? A fit?"

"No; nothing has happened."

"How is it you didn't bring him?"

"He's pulling his house to pieces."

"What?"

"He's standing on the roof of the new building, and pulling it to pieces. Forty boards or more, I should guess, must have come down by now, and some five of the rafters too." ("They shall not have a roof over their heads." Harlov's words came back to me.)

My mother stared at Kvitsinsky. "Alone . . . he's standing on the roof, and pulling the roof down?"

"Exactly so. He is walking about on the flooring of the garret in the roof, and smashing right and left of him. His strength, you are aware, madam, is superhuman. And the roof too, one must say, is a poor affair; half-inch deal battens, laid wide apart, one inch nails."

My mother looked at me, as though wishing to make sure whether she had heard aright. "Half-inches wide apart" she repeated, obviously not understanding the meaning of one word. "Well, what then?" she said at last.

"I have come for instructions. There's no doing anything without men to help. The peasants there are all limp with fright."

"And his daughters — what of them?"

"His daughters are doing nothing. They're running to and fro, shouting . . . this and that . . . all to no purpose."

"And is Sletkin there?"

"He's there too. He's making more outcry than all of them — but he can't do anything."

"And Martin Petrovitch is standing on the roof?"

"On the roof . . . that is, in the garret — and pulling the roof to pieces."

"Yes, yes," said my mother, "half-inches wide apart."

The position was obviously a serious one. What steps were to be taken? Send to the town for the police captain? Get together the peasants? My mother was quite at her wits' end. Zhitkov, who had come in to dinner, was nonplussed too. It is true, he made another reference to a battalion of military; he offered no advice, however, but confined himself to looking submissive and devoted. Kvitsinsky, seeing he would not get at any instructions, suggested to my mother — with the contemptuous respectfulness peculiar to him — that if she would authorise him to take a few of the stable-boys, gardeners, and other house-serfs, he would make an effort . . .

"Yes, yes," my mother cut him short, "do make an effort, dear Vikenty Osipitch! Only make haste, please, and I will take all responsibility on myself!"

Kvitsinsky smiled coldly. "One thing let me make clear, madam, beforehand; it's impossible to reckon on any result, seeing that Mr. Harlov's strength is so great, and he is so desperate too; he feels himself to have been very cruelly wronged!"

"Yes, yes," my mother assented; "and it's all that vile Souvenir's fault! Never will I forgive him for it. Go and take the servants and set off, Vikenty Osipitch!"

"You'd better take plenty of cord, Mr. Steward, and some fire-escape tackle," Zhitkov brought out in his bass — "and if there is such a thing

as a net, it would be as well to take that along too. We once had in our regiment . . ."

"Kindly refrain from instructing me, sir." Kvitsinsky cut him short, with an air of vexation; "I know what is needed without your aid."

Zhitkov was offended, and protested that as he imagined he, too, was called upon . . .

"No, no!" interposed my mother; "you'd better stop where you are . . . Let Vikenty Osipitch act alone . . . Make haste, Vikenty Osipitch!"

Zhitkov was still more offended, while Kvitsinsky bowed and went out.

I rushed off to the stable, hurriedly saddled my horse myself, and set off at a gallop along the road to Eskovo.

XXVI

The rain had ceased, but the wind was blowing with redoubled force — straight into my face. Half-way there, the saddle almost slipped round under me; the girth had got loose; I got off and tried to tighten the straps with my teeth. . . . All at once I heard someone calling me by my name . . . Souvenir was running towards me across the green fields. "What!" he shouted to me from some way off, "was your curiosity too much for you? But it's no use . . . I went over there, straight, at Harlov's heels . . . Such a state of things you never saw in your life!"

"You want to enjoy what you have done," I said indignantly, and, jumping on my horse, I set off again at a gallop. But the indefatigable Souvenir did not give me up, and chuckled and grinned, even as he ran. At last, Eskovo was reached — there was the dam, and there the long hedge and willow-tree of the homestead . . . I rode up to the gate, dismounted, tied up my horse, and stood still in amazement.

Of one third of the roof of the newer house, of the front part, nothing was left but the skeleton; boards and litter lay in disorderly heaps on the ground on both sides of the building. Even supposing the roof to be, as Kvitsinsky had said, a poor affair, even so, it was something incredible! On the floor of the garret, in a whirl of dust and rubbish, a blackish grey mass was moving to and fro with rapid ungainly action, at one moment shaking the remaining chimney, built of brick (the other had fallen already), then tearing up the boarding and flinging it down below, then clutching at the very rafters. It was Harlov. He struck me as being exactly like a bear at this moment too; the head, and back, and shoulders were a bear's, and he put his feet down wide apart without bending the insteps — also like a bear. The bitter wind was blowing upon him from every side, lifting his matted locks. It was horrible to see, here and there, red patches of bare flesh through the rents in his tattered clothes; it was horrible to hear his wild husky muttering. There were a lot of people in the yard; peasant-women, boys, and servant-girls stood close along the hedge. A

few peasants huddled together in a separate group, a little way off. The old village priest, whom I knew, was standing, bareheaded, on the steps of the other house, and holding a brazen cross in both hands, from time to time, silently and hopelessly, raised it, and, as it were, showed it to Harlov. Beside the priest, stood Evlampia with her back against the wall, gazing fixedly at her father. Anna, at one moment, pushed her head out of the little window, then vanished, then hurried into the yard, then went back into the house. Sletkin — pale all over, livid — in an old dressing-gown and smoking-cap, with a single-barrelled rifle in his hands, kept running to and fro with little steps. He had completely *gone Jewish*, as it is called. He was gasping, threatening, shaking, pointing the gun at Harlov, then letting it drop back on his shoulder — pointing it again, shrieking, weeping. . . . On seeing Souvenir and me he simply flew to us.

"Look, look, what is going on here!" he wailed — "look! He's gone out of his mind, he's raving mad . . . and see what he's doing! I've sent for the police already — but no one comes! No one comes! If I do fire at him, the law couldn't touch me, for every man has a right to defend his own property! And I will fire! . . . By God, I'll fire!"

He ran off toward the house.

"Martin Petrovitch, look out! If you don't get down, I'll fire!"

"Fire away!" came a husky voice from the roof. "Fire away! And meanwhile here's a little present for you!"

A long plank flew up, and, turning over twice in the air, came violently to the earth, just at Sletkin's feet. He positively jumped into the air, while Harlov chuckled.

"Merciful Jesus!" faltered some one behind me. I looked round: Souvenir. "Ah!" I thought, "he's left off laughing now!"

Sletkin clutched a peasant, who was standing near, by the collar.

"Climb up now, climb up, climb up, all of you, you devils," he wailed, shaking the man with all his force, "save my property!"

The peasant took a couple of steps forward, threw his head back, waved his arms, shouted — "hi! here! master!" shifted from one foot to the other uneasily, and then turned back.

"A ladder! bring a ladder!" Sletkin addressed the other peasants.

"Where are we to get it?" was heard in answer.

"And if we had a ladder," one voice pronounced deliberately, "who'd care to climb up? Not such fools! He'd wring your neck for you — in a twinkling!"

"He'd kill one in no time," said one young lad with flaxen hair and a half-idiotic face.

"To be sure he would," the others confirmed. It struck me that, even if there had been no obvious danger, the peasants would yet have been loath to carry out their new owner's orders. They almost approved of Harlov, though they were amazed at him.

"Ugh, you robbers!" moaned Sletkin; "you shall all catch it . . ."

But at this moment, with a heavy rumble, the last chimney came crashing down, and, in the midst of the cloud of yellow dust that flew up instantly, Harlov — uttering a piercing shriek and lifting his bleeding hands high in the air — turned facing us. Sletkin pointed the gun at him again.

Evlampia pulled him back by the elbow.

"Don't interfere!" he snarled savagely at her.

"And you — don't you dare!" she answered; and her blue eyes flashed menacingly under her scowling brows. "Father's pulling his house down. It's his own."

"You lie: it's ours!"

"You say ours; but I say it's his."

Sletkin hissed with fury; Evlampia's eyes seemed stabbing him in the face.

"Ah, how d'ye do! my delightful daughter!" Harlov thundered from above. "How d'ye do! Evlampia Martinovna! How are you getting on with your sweetheart? Are your kisses sweet, and your fondling?"

"Father!" rang out Evlampia's musical voice.

"Eh, daughter?" answered Harlov; and he came down to the very edge of the wall. His face, as far as I could make it out, wore a strange smile, a bright, mirthful — and for that very reason peculiarly strange and evil — smile. . . . Many years later I saw just the same smile on the face of a man condemned to death.

"Stop, father; come down. We are in fault; we give everything back to you. Come down."

"What do you mean by disposing of what's ours?" put in Sletkin. Evlampia merely scowled more angrily.

"I give you back my share. I give up everything. Give over, come down, father! Forgive us; forgive me."

Harlov still went on smiling. "It's too late, my darling," he said, and each of his words rang out like brass. "Too late your stony heart is touched! The rock's started rolling downhill — there's no holding it back now! And don't look to me now; I'm a doomed man! You'd do better to look to your Volodka; see what a pretty fellow you've picked out! And look to your hellish sister; there's her foxy nose yonder thrust out of the window; she's peering yonder after that husband of hers! No, my good friends; you would rob me of a roof over my head, so I will leave you not one beam upon another! With my own hands I built it, with my own hands I destroy it, — yes, with my hands alone! See, I've taken no axe to help me!"

He snorted at his two open hands, and clutched at the centre beam again.

"Enough, father," Evlampia was saying meanwhile, and her voice had grown marvellously caressing, "let bygones be bygones. Come, trust me;

you always trusted me. Come, get down; come to me to my little room, to my soft bed. I will dry you and warm you; I will bind up your wounds; see, you have torn your hands. You shall live with me as in Christ's bosom; food shall be sweet to you — and sleep sweeter yet. Come, we have done wrong! yes, we were puffed up, we have sinned; come, forgive!"

Harlov shook his head. "Talk away! Me believe you! Never again! You've murdered all trust in my heart! You've murdered everything! I was an eagle, and became a worm for you . . . and you, — would you even crush the worm? Have done! I loved you, you know very well, — but now you are no daughter to me, and I'm no father to you . . . I'm a doomed man! Don't meddle! As for you, fire away, coward, mighty man of valour!" Harlov bellowed suddenly at Sletkin. "Why is it you keep aiming and don't shoot? Are you mindful of the law; if the recipient of a gift commits an attempt upon the life of the giver," Harlov enunciated distinctly, "then the giver is empowered to claim everything back again? Ha, ha! don't be afraid, law-abiding man! I'd make no claims. I'll make an end of everything myself. . . . Here goes!"

"Father!" for the last time Evlampia besought him.

"Silence!"

"Martin Petrovitch! brother, be generous and forgive!" faltered Souvenir.

"Father! dear father!"

"Silence, bitch!" shouted Harlov. At Souvenir he did not even glance, — he merely spat in his direction.

XXVII

At that instant, Kvitsinsky, with all his retinue — in three carts — appeared at the gates. The tired horses panted, the men jumped out, one after another, into the mud.

"Aha!" Harlov shouted at the top of his voice. "An army . . . here it comes, an army! A whole army they're sending against me! Capital! Only I give warning — if any one comes up here to me on the roof, I'll send him flying down, head over heels! I'm an inhospitable master; I don't like visitors at wrong times! No indeed!"

He was hanging with both hands on to the front rafters of the roof, the so-called standards of the gable, and beginning to shake them violently. Balancing on the edge of the garret flooring, he dragged them, as it were, after him, chanting rhythmically like a bargeman, "One more pull! one more! o-oh!"

Sletkin ran up to Kvitsinsky and was beginning to whimper and pour out complaints. . . . The latter begged him "not to interfere," and proceeded to carry out the plan he had evolved. He took up his position in front of the house, and began, by way of diversion, to explain to Harlov that what he was about was unworthy of his rank. . . .

"One more pull! one more!" chanted Harlov. . . . "That Natalia Nikolaevna was greatly displeased at his proceedings, and had not expected it of him." . . .

"One more pull! one more! o-oh!" Harlov chanted . . . while, meantime, Kvitsinsky had despatched the four sturdiest and boldest of the stable-boys to the other side of the house to clamber up the roof from behind. Harlov, however, detected the plan of attack; he suddenly left the standards and ran quickly to the back part of the roof. His appearance was so alarming that the two stable-boys who had already got up to the garret, dropped instantly back again to the ground by the water-pipe, to the great glee of the serf boys, who positively roared with laughter. Harlov shook his fist after them and, going back to the front part of the house, again clutched at the standards and began once more loosening them, singing again, like a bargeman.

Suddenly he stopped, stared. . . .

"Maximushka, my dear! my friend!" he cried; "is it you?"

I looked round. . . . There, actually, was Maximka, stepping out from the crowd of peasants. Grinning and showing his teeth, he walked forward. His master, the tailor, had probably let him come home for a holiday.

"Climb up to me, Maximushka, my faithful servant," Harlov went on; "together let us rid ourselves of evil Tartar folk, of Lithuanian thieves!"

Maximka, still grinning, promptly began climbing up the roof. . . . But they seized him and pulled him back — goodness knows why; possibly as an example to the rest; he could hardly have been much aid to Martin Petrovitch.

"Oh, all right! Good!" Harlov pronounced, in a voice of menace, and again he took hold of the standards.

"Vikenty Osipovitch! with your permission, I'll shoot," Sletkin turned to Kvitsinsky; "more to frighten him, see, than anything; my gun's only charged with snipe-shot." But Kvitsinsky had not time to answer him, when the front couple of standards, viciously shaken in Harlov's iron hands, heeled over with a loud crack and crashed into the yard; and with it, not able to stop himself, came Harlov too, and fell with a heavy thud on the earth. Every one shuddered and drew a deep breath. . . . Harlov lay without stirring on his breast, and on his back lay the top central beam of the roof, which had come down with the falling gable's timbers.

XXVIII

They ran up to Harlov, rolled the beam off him, turned him over on his back. His face was lifeless, there was blood about his mouth; he did not seem to breathe. "The breath is gone out of him," muttered the peasants, standing about him. They ran to the well for water, brought a whole bucketful, and drenched Harlov's head. The mud and dust ran off his

face, but he looked as lifeless as ever. They dragged up a bench, set it in the house itself, and with difficulty raising the huge body of Martin Petrovitch, laid it there with the head to the wall. The page Maximka approached, fell on one knee, and, his other leg strètched far behind him, in a theatrical way, supported his former master's arm. Evlampia, pale as death, stood directly facing her father, her great eyes fastened immovably upon him. Anna and Sletkin did not come near him. All were silent, all, as it were, waited for something. At last we heard broken, smacking noises in Harlov's throat, as though he were swallowing. . . . Then he feebly moved one, his right, hand (Maximka supported the left), opened one, the right eye, and slowly gazing about him, as though drunken with some fearful drunkenness, groaned, articulated, stammering, "I'm sma-ashed" . . . and as though after a moment's thought, added, "here it is, the ra . . . . aven co . . . olt!" The blood suddenly gushed thickly from his mouth . . . his whole body began to quiver. . . .

"The end!" I thought. . . . But once more Harlov opened the same eye (the left eyelid lay as motionless as on a dead man's face), and fixing it on Evlampia, he articulated, hardly above a breath, "Well, daugh . . . ter . . . you, I do not . . ."

Kvitsinsky, with a sharp motion of his hand, beckoned to the priest, who was still standing on the step. . . . The old man came up, his narrow cassock clinging about his feeble knees. But suddenly there was a sort of horrible twitching in Harlov's legs and in his stomach too; an irregular contraction passed upwards over his face. Evlampia's face seemed quivering and working in the same way. Maximka began crossing himself. . . . I was seized with horror; I ran out to the gates, squeezed myself close to them, not looking round. A minute later a soft murmur ran through the crowd, behind my back, and I understood that Martin Petrovitch was no more.

His skull had been fractured by the beam and his ribs injured, as it appeared at the post-mortem examination.

XXIX

What had he wanted to say to her as he lay dying? I asked myself as I went home on my cob: "I do not . . . forgive," or "do not . . . pardon." The rain had come on again, but I rode at a walking pace. I wanted to be alone as long as possible; I wanted to give myself up to my reflections, unchecked. Souvenir had gone back in one of the carts that had come with Kvitsinsky. Young and frivolous as I was at that time, the sudden sweeping change (not in mere details only) that is invariably called forth in all hearts by the coming of death — expected or unexpected, it makes no difference! — its majesty, its gravity, and its truthfulness could not fail to impress me. I was impressed too, . . . but for all that, my troubled, child-

ish eyes noted many things at once; they noted how Sletkin, hurriedly and furtively as though it were something stolen, popped the gun out of sight; how he and his wife became, both of them, instantly the object of a sort of unspoken but universal aloofness. To Evlampia, though her fault was probably no less than her sister's, this aloofness did not extend. She even aroused a certain sympathy, when she fell at her dead father's feet. But that she too was guilty, that was none the less felt by all. "The old man was wronged," said a grey-haired peasant with a big head, leaning, like some ancient judge, with both hands and his beard on a long staff; "on your soul lies the sin! You wronged him!" That saying was at once accepted by every one as the final judgment. The peasants' sense of justice found expression in it, I felt that at once. I noticed too that, at the first, Sletkin did not *dare* to give directions. Without him, they lifted up the body and carried it into the other house. Without asking him, the priest went for everything needful to the church, while the village elder ran to the village to send off a cart and horse to the town. Even Anna Martinovna did not venture to use her ordinary imperious tone in ordering the samovar to be brought, "for hot water, to wash the deceased." Her orders were more like an entreaty, and she was answered rudely. . . .

I was absorbed all the while by the question, What was it exactly he wanted to say to his daughter? Did he want to forgive her or to curse her? Finally I decided that it was — forgiveness.

Three days later, the funeral of Martin Petrovitch took place. The cost of the ceremony was undertaken by my mother, who was deeply grieved at his death, and gave orders that no expense was to be spared. She did not herself go to the church, because she was unwilling, as she said, to set eyes on those two vile hussies and that nasty little Jew. But she sent Kvitsinsky, me, and Zhitkov, though from that time forward she always spoke of the latter as a regular old woman. Souvenir she did not admit to her presence, and was furious with him for long after, saying that he was the murderer of her friend. He felt his disgrace acutely; he was continually running, on tiptoe, up and down the room, next to the one where my mother was; he gave himself up to a sort of scared and abject melancholy, shuddering and muttering, "d'rectly!"

In church, and during the procession, Sletkin struck me as having recovered his self-possession. He gave directions and bustled about in his old way, and kept a greedy look-out that not a superfluous farthing should be spent, though his own pocket was not in question. Maximka, in a new Cossack dress, also a present from my mother, gave vent to such tenor notes in the choir, that certainly no one could have any doubts as to the sincerity of his devotion to the deceased. Both the sisters were duly attired in mourning, but they seemed more stupefied than grieved, especially Evlampia. Anna wore a meek, Lenten air, but made no attempt to weep, and was continually passing her handsome, thin hand over her hair and

cheek. Evlampia seemed deep in thought all the time. The universal, unbending alienation, condemnation, which I had noticed on the day of Harlov's death, I detected now too on the faces of all the people in the church, in their actions and their glances, but still more grave and, as it were, impersonal. It seemed as though all those people felt that the sin into which the Harlov family had fallen — this great sin — had gone now before the presence of the one righteous Judge, and that for that reason, there was no need now for them to trouble themselves and be indignant. They prayed devoutly for the soul of the dead man, whom in life they had not specially liked, whom they had feared indeed. Very abruptly had death overtaken him.

"And it's not as though he had been drinking heavily, brother," said one peasant to another, in the porch.

"Nay, without drink he was drunken indeed," responded the other.

"He was cruelly wronged," the first peasant repeated the phrase that summed it up.

"Cruelly wronged," the others murmured after him.

"The deceased was a hard master to you, wasn't he?" I asked a peasant, whom I recognised as one of Harlov's serfs.

"He was a master, certainly," answered the peasant, "but still . . . he was cruelly wronged!"

"Cruelly wronged," . . . I heard again in the crowd.

At the grave, too, Evlampia stood, as it were, lost. Thoughts were torturing her . . . bitter thoughts. I noticed that Sletkin, who several times addressed some remark to her, she treated as she had once treated Zhitkov, and worse still.

Some days later, there was a rumour all over our neighbourhood, that Evlampia Martinovna had left the home of her fathers for ever, leaving all the property that came to her to her sister and brother-in-law, and only taking some hundreds of roubles. . . . "So Anna's bought her out, it seems!" remarked my mother; "but you and I, certainly," she added, addressing Zhitkov, with whom she was playing picquet — he took Souvenir's place, "are not skilful hands!" Zhitkov looked dejectedly at his mighty palms. . . . "Hands like that! Not skilful!" he seemed to be saying to himself. . . .

Soon after, my mother and I went to live in Moscow, and many years passed before it was my lot to behold Martin Petrovitch's daughters again.

XXX

But I did see them again. Anna Martinovna I came across in the most ordinary way.

After my mother's death I paid a visit to our village, where I had not been for over fifteen years, and there I received an invitation from the

mediator (at that time the process of settling the boundaries between the peasants and their former owners was taking place over the whole of Russia with a slowness not yet forgotten) to a meeting of the other landowners of our neighbourhood, to be held on the estate of the widow Anna Sletkin. The news that my mother's "nasty little Jew," with the prune-coloured eyes, no longer existed in this world, caused me, I confess, no regret whatever. But it was interesting to get a glimpse of his widow. She had the reputation in the neighbourhood of a first-rate manager. And so it proved; her estate and homestead and the house itself (I could not help glancing at the roof; it was an iron one) all turned out to be in excellent order; everything was neat, clean, tidied-up, where needful — painted, as though its mistress were a German. Anna Martinovna herself, of course, looked older. But the peculiar, cold, and, as it were, wicked charm which had once so fascinated me had not altogether left her. She was dressed in rustic fashion, but elegantly. She received us, not cordially — that word was not applicable to her — but courteously, and on seeing me, a witness of that fearful scene, not an eyelash quivered. She made not the slightest reference to my mother, nor her father, nor her sister, nor her husband.

She had two daughters, both very pretty, slim young things, with charming little faces and a bright and friendly expression in their black eyes. There was a son, too, a little like his father, but still a boy to be proud of! During the discussions between the landowners, Anna Martinovna's attitude was composed and dignified, she showed no sign of being specially obstinate, nor specially grasping. But none had a truer perception of their own interests than she of hers; none could more convincingly expound and defend their rights. All the laws "pertinent to the case," even the Minister's circulars, she had thoroughly mastered. She spoke little, and in a quiet voice, but every word she uttered was to the point. It ended in our all signifying our agreement to all her demands, and making concessions, which we could only marvel at ourselves. On our way home, some of the worthy landowners even used harsh words of themselves; they all hummed and hawed, and shook their heads.

"Ah, she's got brains that woman!" said one.

"A tricky baggage!" put in another less delicate proprietor. "Smooth in word, but cruel in deed!"

"And a screw into the bargain!" added a third; "not a glass of vodka nor a morsel of caviare for us — what do you think of that?"

"What can one expect of her?" suddenly croaked a gentleman who had been silent till then, "every one knows she poisoned her husband!"

To my astonishment, nobody thought fit to controvert this awful and certainly unfounded charge! I was the more surprised at this, as, in spite of the slighting expressions I have reported, all of them felt respect for Anna Martinovna, not excluding the indelicate landowner. As for the mediator, he waxed positively eloquent.

"Put her on a throne," he exclaimed, "she'd be another Semiramis or Catherine the Second! The discipline among her peasants is a perfect model. . . . The education of her children is model! What a head! What brains!"

Without going into the question of Semiramis and Catherine, there was no doubt Anna Martinovna was living a very happy life. Ease, inward and external, the pleasant serenity of spiritual health, seemed the very atmosphere about herself, her family, all her surroundings. How far she had deserved such happiness . . . that is another question. Such questions, though, are only propounded in youth. Everything in the world, good and bad, comes to man, not through his deserts, but in consequence of some as yet unknown but logical laws which I will not take upon myself to indicate, though I sometimes fancy I have a dim perception of them.

XXXI

I QUESTIONED the mediator about Evlampia Martinovna, and learnt that she had been lost sight of completely ever since she left home, and probably "had departed this life long ago."

So our worthy mediator expressed himself . . . but I am convinced that I *have seen* Evlampia, that I have come across her. This was how it was.

Four years after my interview with Anna Martinovna, I was spending the summer at Murino, a little hamlet near Petersburg, a well-known resort of summer visitors of the middle class. The shooting was pretty decent about Murino at that time, and I used to go out with my gun almost every day. I had a companion on my expeditions, a man of the tradesman class, called Vikulov, a very sensible and good-natured fellow; but, as he said of himself, of no position whatever. This man had been simply everywhere, and everything! Nothing could astonish him, he knew everything — but he cared for nothing but shooting and wine. Well, one day we were on our way home to Murino, and we chanced to pass a solitary house, standing at the cross-roads, and enclosed by a high, close paling. It was not the first time I had seen the house, and every time it excited my curiosity. There was something about it mysterious, locked-up, grimly-dumb, something suggestive of a prison or a hospital. Nothing of it could be seen from the road but its steep, dark, red-painted roof. There was only one pair of gates in the whole fence; and these seemed fastened and never opened. No sound came from the other side of them. For all that, we felt that some one was certainly living in the house; it had not at all the air of a deserted dwelling. On the contrary, everything about it was stout, and tight, and strong, as if it would stand a siege!

"What is that fortress?" I asked my companion. "Don't you know?"

Vikulov gave a sly wink. "A fine building, eh? The police-captain of these parts gets a nice little income out of it!"

"How's that?"

"I'll tell you. You've heard, I daresay, of the Flagellant dissenters — that do without priests, you know?"

"Yes."

"Well, it's there that their chief mother lives."

"A woman?"

"Yes — the mother; a mother of God, they say."

"Nonsense!"

"I tell you, it is so. She is a strict one, they say. . . . A regular commander-in-chief! She rules over thousands! I'd take her, and all these mothers of God . . . But what's the use of talking?"

He called his Pegashka, a marvellous dog, with an excellent scent, but with no notion of setting. Vikulov was obliged to tie her hind paws to keep her from running so furiously.

His words sank into my memory. I sometimes went out of my way to pass by the mysterious house. One day I had just got up to it, when suddenly — wonderful to relate! — a bolt grated in the gates, a key creaked in the lock, then the gates themselves slowly parted, there appeared a large horse's head, with a plaited forelock under a decorated yoke, and slowly there rolled into the road a small cart, like those driven by horse-dealers, and higglers. On the leather cushion of the cart, near to me, sat a peasant of about thirty, of a remarkably handsome and attractive appearance, in a neat black smock, and a black cap, pulled down low on his forehead. He was carefully driving the well-fed horse, whose sides were as broad as a stove. Beside the peasant, on the far side of the cart, sat a tall woman, as straight as an arrow. Her head was covered by a costly-looking black shawl. She was dressed in a short jerkin of dove-coloured velvet, and a dark blue merino skirt; her white hands she held discreetly clasped on her bosom. The cart turned on the road to the left, and brought the woman within two paces of me; she turned her head a little, and I recognised Evlampia Harlov. I knew her at once, I did not doubt for one instant, and indeed no doubt was possible; eyes like hers, and above all that cut of the lips — haughty and sensual — I had never seen in any one else. Her face had grown longer and thinner, the skin was darker, here and there lines could be discerned; but, above all, the expression of the face was changed! It is difficult to do justice in words to the self-confidence, the sternness, the pride it had gained! Not simply the serenity of power — the satiety of power was visible in every feature. The careless glance she cast at me told of long years of habitually meeting nothing but reverent, unquestioning obedience. That woman clearly lived surrounded, not by worshippers, but by slaves. She had clearly forgotten even the time when any command, any desire of hers, was not carried out at the instant! I called her loudly by her name and her father's; she gave a faint start, looked at me a second time, not with alarm, but with contemptuous wrath, as

though asking — "Who dares to disturb me?" and barely parting her lips, uttered a word of command. The peasant sitting beside her started forward, with a wave of his arm struck the horse with the reins — the horse set off at a strong rapid trot, and the cart disappeared.

Since then I have not seen Evlampia again. In what way Martin Petrovitch's daughter came to be a Holy Virgin in the Flagellant sect I cannot imagine. But, who knows, very likely she has founded a sect which will be called — or even now is called — after her name, the Evlampieshtchin sect? Anything may be, anything may come to pass.

And so this is what I had to tell you of my *Lear of the Steppes*, of his family and his doings.

The story-teller ceased, and we talked a little longer, and then parted, each to his home.

MAXIM GORKY

(1868–)

Alexei Maximovitch Pyeshkov, known under the pseudonym of Maxim Gorky, was born at Nijni Novgorod in 1868. An orphan at the age of nine, he was first apprenticed to a bootmaker. His early life was spent in wandering all over Russia, plying "various trades and reading greedily all the books" he could lay his hands upon. His experiences as a vagabond furnished him with ample material for his stories, novels, plays, and books of reminiscences. Gorky has specialised, particularly in his early works, in the interpretation of that class of social outcast he knows best.

Though his shorter stories and novels are perhaps better known than his latest tales, *A Sky-Blue Life* (which is recent) is one of his most remarkable productions.

The translation that follows is essentially that made by Marie Zakrevsky (with the assistance of the editor of the present volume), published in *The Story of a Novel and Other Stories*, published by Lincoln MacVeagh, The Dial Press, Inc., New York, 1925. It is copyright, 1925, by the Dial Press, Inc. The text has been slightly revised by the editor. It is printed by permission of the publisher and the author's agents.

A SKY-BLUE LIFE

KONSTANTIN MIRONOFF sat at his window staring into the street, trying not to think. The wind had finally swept the sky clean of clouds, and arranging in pretty festoons and ripples the dust along the unpaved thoroughfare, died down as though burying itself in the road. Sparrows came flying like bouncing balls, and gathered round a chicken's head and plucked at the feathers; a cat crawled from under the Rosanoffs' gate, watched the birds intently, took aim at one, but sprang a moment too late. She patted the tender morsel with her soft paw, then snatching it, shook it violently and deliberately, and sedately raising her tail, carried her booty off under the gate.

Ivan Ivanovitch Rosanoff came plodding along, chasing a fawn-colored goat before him with a stick. The church bells had just begun to ring. The man lifted his hat and revealed a bald skull resembling that of a holy martyr. He glanced up with approval into the cool azure sky, while the goat, stopping in its turn, shook its beard and planted its hoofs deep in the dirt.

"All this," mused Mironoff, "would be quite impossible in Paris. One is not allowed to lead goats through the streets of Paris. And people don't throw dead chickens' heads out of their windows."

In the distance below, beyond the lead-colored strip of river, behind the dingy distillery buildings and the gray houses occupied by the local colony of lunatics, a swollen, orange-hued, rayless sun was sinking over the sandy hills, among the shaggy black junipers. Mironoff had witnessed the same phenomenon day in and day out for so long that it had become tiresome as the page of an often-read book. In order to divert his thoughts he imagined the pearl-tinted sky to be a huge map: there was Moscow, there Berlin, there Cologne, and — there ought to be Paris. This evening the sky was too crowded to show Paris, which was very irritating. It was important that Paris should be seen in the imaginary map, it should have a tangible position. It rose before him, a city of azure blue, filled with a solemn organ music, a city with happy inhabitants and wondrous adventures, where life was easy and simple, where even so wicked a fellow as Rocambole found it impossible to be wicked all the time. In Paris the monster Quasimodo himself was pleasantly fascinating. There lived the Three Musketeers, the mysterious Knight of the Hen-House, the fearless D'Artagnan ——

On the river bank two voices greeted the sinking sun with a song chanted in a languid drawl to the accompaniment of the brassy clang of church bells. All day long, since early morning, the dry wind had driven the dust in circling eddies, so that the song and the bells seemed to have combined to bring peace and relief, a sweet orderliness into the life of men.

And yet the blessed stillness of Saturday evening could not appease the troubled soul of Mironoff. It was torn asunder, entangled, perplexed; his memory suggested pictures of the past and overwhelmed him with a sense of the chaos of life. It was the first time he had felt any real mental disturbance. He must think, and the effort filled him with a strange fear. He left the window and inspected several times every corner of the room, as though hoping to find in the bluish dusk what it was that compelled him to meditate.

Queer: even when he closed his eyes, the darkness trembled: whirlwinds danced, arranging themselves in strange shapes, now in straight lines, now in circles, finally forming themselves into tall pillars of black dust. The darkness became palpable, effervescent, and then unaccountably forced him again to wonder, "How am I going to order my life?"

Thought! What did it mean? Not long before his father's death, his mother had said to her husband one day, "You ought to do a bit of thinking, you fool. You haven't long to live!" The good man had replied with a smile:

"Do you know what thinking means? It means wiping away the dust. See, you have a dusting rag in your hand. It was clean once, and now it is dirty. Both you and I, Lydia, have done a good deal of thinking, and . . ."

His mother, once a careful housekeeper who prided herself on her work, was very angry at this, and began to scream:

"You call me a dirty rag? D'you mean my house is dirty?"

Two weeks after, Mironoff had discovered his mother lying on the kitchen floor with one shoulder against the stove. Propping herself precariously on one arm, she emitted low groans and grunts. Thinking she was still drunk, Mironoff stooped to assist her, but she snatched her arm away, and fell heavily at his feet. For four days she continued to moan and kept brandishing her arm as though warding off something, and on the fifth fell out of bed, crept into a far corner of the room, and died. For a whole week strange persons fussed about the place from morning till night: the hunchbacked nursing-sister, the fat doctor who shouted orders and smoked incessantly, the yellow-bearded priest Boris who sat with his legs outstretched. Everyone asked Mironoff questions. Kallistrat the carpenter, whom everybody disliked, impertinently inquired of the boy:

"And now what are you going to do, you poor orphan?"

In Paris, dying and being buried are far simpler matters: the funeral arrangements are even interesting. Here they were unnecessary and dreadful. In Paris strange people didn't come to gloat over the body of the deceased. As for Kallistrat, in Paris he would never have been tolerated.

The day Mironoff's mother died, the carpenter took a pot of sour cream out into the street and dipping a brush into it began to paint his garden fence. Why? He was not drunk. He went through the performance with the utmost gravity. When someone inquired what he thought he was doing, he calmly replied, "I am painting the fence."

"With sour cream?"

"I couldn't find any paint." And for ten minutes he worked in silence, conscientiously daubing the gray boards discolored by the sun. A small group of youngsters and men watched him. The performance was suddenly ended when Ivan Ivanovitch Rosanoff came up and kicked the pot, smashing it to pieces.

The doctor, in examining the body, had said in his offensive manner: "If she had not drunk so hard, she would have been good for another forty years."

And Mironoff remembered that though at the time the words had sounded crude, he had made a swift calculation: if she had lived that long, *he* would have been fifty-nine, and she would doubtless have gone on shouting at him all her life: "You fool! You're just like your father." Large-eyed, rough, half-drunk from the moment she got up, she would have rolled from room to room, dusting, killing flies, and filling the atmosphere with the smell of pickled onions and soaked apples, her favorite dishes. And she would have abused his father. She always did that, especially on holidays when he would hang his topographer's uniform over his gaunt and lanky body and go to town for a game of billiards. He was good at billiards, as he was at all things. In word and deed he was an exceptional man. His long, lanky figure, his thin unkempt beard and strange straggly

little moustache, were vivid in his son's memory. He had a nasty habit of coughing and spitting. He used to tell the youthful Kostia marvelous tales about the Turks and General Skobeleff, the Caucasus, Khiva and Bukhara, his eyes alight with merriment. He was a carefree pilgrim, a wanderer over the face of the earth. Under his left eye was a red scar, the result of a wound (in the Turkish campaign) that wrinkled that side of his face: the eye itself seemed as though it were always peeping out at one. He never quarrelled with his wife, and seldom argued; instead, he would drive her to distraction by a sarcastic word, which made her bellow at him:

"You shut up, Mitka! God will punish you for your foolishness, you just wait and see!"

"God never punishes stupidity," he had answered, "God loves fools." These words had disturbed the lad. He remembered them often afterward. One day, when he was mending a violin, the father had taken from the instrument a short round little stick. "This thing," he said, "is called the soul. In you, too, Lydia, there is a little spindle like this, put in you by the devil."

"Liar!" she replied, "my soul comes from God!"

On her Name Day one year, her husband on returning from church had presented her with several yards of cashmere for a new dress. Wrapped up in it was a loathsome picture called *The Death of a Sinner:* at the feet of a dying man stood a green devil, sticking out a fiery tongue, his lip curled in a sneer. She had laughed at first, but thinking about it later and having drunk a good deal at dinner, she suddenly burst out crying and wailing: "My misery! My cross!" In her rare moments of repose she called her husband a conjurer because he had made a music box that could play *The Reel, Mother Dear* and the national anthem. One day, when drunk, she had smashed the music box, and trampled the bits under her feet. Kostia had later gathered up the fragments and hidden them in the garret, and had often begged his father to mend the instrument, the miraculous contraption that could play by itself gay, sad or solemn tunes, but his father had replied:

"What nonsense! It's only a box. Don't bother me." And with a sigh as he thoughtfully played with the boy's ear, he added: "If she would only burst, drink herself to death, I'd be able to do some fine things." He liked to make delicate mechanical instruments, accordions and violins, to repair picture frames and the like, and when he worked he always sang:

Seven sons, seven sons,
What shall we do with seven sons?

The most successful of his father's many contrivances was a globe. Kostia still had it: it was a present to him on graduating into his second term. Except for the lower half, it was an ordinary globe, but on this lower half (constructed out of a tin wash basin) he had burnt with acid, all the out-

lines of the oceans and hemispheres, continents and islands, skilfully coloring the various parts. The thing was held firmly in place by a steel comb, fixed with solder. The comb was so arranged that when the globe turned on its axis it would play a pretty tinkling tune: "Siskin, Siskin, where have you been?" Even his mother had liked this, and often turned the globe with childish joy, laughing her drunken laugh. But the cat had objected, and whenever the tune began, she would scamper away. When he was bored, Kostia used to annoy the cat by turning the globe.

Yes, his father was on the whole a cheerful man, but now whenever Kostia remembered his jokes, they failed to bring him either solace or joy. He was even distressed.

In the year of his death the old man had started on a pilgrimage to a monastery. Before leaving, he had fixed to all the doors of his flat little devices made out of rubber balls and sticks of wood, which shrieked piercingly whenever a door was opened or closed. This drove his wife to distraction.

"Are you making fun of me?" she shouted, struck her husband across the face, and proceeded to demolish all the alarms. He had smiled and walked off jauntily into the garden, lain down on the grass under the lime-tree, laughed, and fallen into a restless sleep. Mironoff recalled how strangely his father had talked in his delirious slumber. He had gone out and sat by his side. A wave of compassion swelled in his heart as he scrutinized the thin gray face. The dear, queer man! He was incomprehensible. In that hour a sorrowful shadow was cast over his love for his father. At the same time a feeling of mistrust was born in him. He had received at the time one of those ineffaceable impressions that determine the course of a man's life. The bees droned heavily in the thick foliage, so that nothing else could be heard. It was a sultry summer day. High overhead swam the deep blue sky, a symphony of serene beauty. The boy had watched it for a long while, until his eyes smarted. He was awakened from his dream by the distant song of what he guessed to be a lark. From that day he found that he had to think in terms of sound; sounds echoed every thought that came to him and burst into wordless song.

During the last two weeks he had been unable to stifle his thoughts by sounds. The dust of memory invaded his brain, the dull voice of his father echoed, and the everlasting wrangling of his mother. He learned from her as a boy that she had been married before, to her second husband's employer. The first husband had once tried to shoot his successor. "My misfortune," was her comment, "that he missed you!"

And now Kostia was conscious that something dark and dangerous had been hidden in the lives of his parents, something perhaps even criminal.

He was afraid to think of it, yet the thought persisted, until he became interested in books; from these he learned that there were other more interesting mysteries in the world. They had opened a vista of beauty before

him. He was bashful and awkward and had no friends. Since he was often subject to colds, he found ample time to read. It was during the long hours of reading that the miraculous city of Paris arose in a blue mist of faery magic out of the encumbering shadows.

His father had died in the spring-time. His mother behaved dreadfully: "There, Mitia, you see . . . I told you. . . ." The four years spent alone with the drunken woman had made him more introspective than ever. He found pleasure in fishing and long walks in the fields and woods, where he listened to the birds, the rustle of grass and leaves, and the stranger whisper of the wind. What he loved most was to hear the distant strains of the military band on holidays. He would stand and watch the soldiers as they drew near, puffing out their cheeks as they blew their horns and bugles, but after a time there was no fun even in this. He would then take with him on his excursions a French grammar, ponder it and try to remember what he had studied. But he had not a very good memory and the words became transmitted into groups of meaningless though utterly beautiful sounds, into a sort of mystic blue music.

It was on Easter Sunday that he was for the first time conscious of Lisa Rosanoff. She was dressed that morning in a blue dress. She had just come out of church; the bells were ringing and the sun blazing splendidly. Small, slim, dainty and lovely as a flower, she seemed to reflect the azure of the heavens over her. Living just across the street, Mironoff had often seen her, but hitherto the girl had seemed merely thin and peaked, her face with its round staring eyes and pouting (or was it just weary?) lips, had not appealed to him. He had once thought she was almost as unattractive as himself. He knew that the girl was taking goat's milk as a cure; the odor was decidedly disagreeable.

That Easter morning he was filled with joyful amazement: how had he failed to notice that Lisa was beautiful? From that day he had made her the companion of his sky-blue dreams. She was a straw to which he clung in the swirling current of life, a life that was fearful and unfathomable. He had not the courage to become acquainted with the girl, but every day on his way home from the office he lingered as he passed her house, and after dinner he would sit by the window looking out to see whether she might be anywhere visible. Sometimes she stepped out, and tripped lightly off toward the river, to join her father at the lumber yard. As she went down the street she clung close to the hedges, as though reserving the right to dart into a gateway if it became necessary to hide. A short braid of dark hair, tied with a sky-blue ribbon, dangled down her narrow little back. This girl had at least one thing in common with Mironoff: she evidently was afraid of people, and this brought her still closer to him. After he had watched her until she disappeared from view, he turned to the mirror and scrutinized, with a feeling of rebellion in his heart, his dark motionless eyes, set wide apart; in the left was a slight squint that made the eye appear to

be peeping at the protuberant waxen ear behind it; his upper lip, shadowed faintly with down, contrasted strikingly with his parchment-colored ill-formed nose; his hair was a mass of rebellious locks. It seemed that everything about him grew in the wrong direction; he was like a tree planted in barren soil. His arms were too long, his fingers too bony, his mouth too large, and his teeth so irregular that he was afraid to smile. It was not pleasant to look at the reflection in the glass. He had noticed that if one looks long enough, dark circles appear round the eyes and the reflection seems to fade. Now it seemed to him that he himself was fading at the same time.

Not long before his mother's death he had surprised himself by asking her: "Mother, why don't you ask Lisa's parents to allow me to marry her?" He had blushed and become frightened because he had unwittingly revealed his secret. But that day she had not been drinking, and had little to say. She had merely looked at him contemptuously and called him a fool. A fine husband he would make! And clenching her large swollen fingers she brandished her fist in the air, saying that a husband should behave like *that!* The more he thought about his mother the stranger and coarser did she seem: he could not forget her huge misshapen body, her large dull eyes. He wanted to wipe the dust from her shadow.

The blue dusk in the room had thickened. It was warm. Over beyond the river, the evening star shone brightly in the rose-tinted sky. A cart rumbled along the street, loaded with furniture — mattresses, flower-pots and the rest; under an artificial palm a girl reclined, dressed in a red blouse, a white shawl tied round her head. She was sitting on some bundles holding on her knees a cage with a blackbird in it. A few gaily colored toys fell from the cart and rolled in the dust. An old man, his head tilted forward and flourishing a whip, trod by the side of the heavy thick-legged horse.

"Well," he shouted to the girl, "who do you go to? Where shall we make our complaint?"

"The old fool!" thought Mironoff.

Artamon, the teamster from the lumber yard, thick-set and heavy as a bear, came down the street. His shaggy countenance was disfigured by a hare-lip, his mouth formed a triangle revealing in all their savagery a set of yellow teeth. With him was the tall and slender carpenter Kallistrat, bare-footed, wearing an apron smeared with paint and glue, a dark leather band round his fair curly hair. His golden whiskers made a brave show under his hawk-like nose. As he passed Mironoff's window he twisted the strands of his beard round his fingers and, looking sidewise at his companion, murmured: "Touchy chap!"

"Well, you better leave him alone," returned Artamon, "let him be touchy by himself!" And, passing on, they disappeared in a reddish cloud of dust. Everyone in the street was struck with admiration at the super-

human physique of the teamster; everyone feared him just as everyone feared the mischievous impudence of the carpenter.

Mironoff closed his eyes. It seemed as though that made him invisible to others.

Often he dreamed strange dreams after a sleepless night: once he dreamed he was on a broad road illuminated by bonfires, and along the road stretched an interminable file of marching coffee-pots, all the same size and all with long thin legs, looking like spiders. Again, a small hunchbacked monster paced the street, driving in nails so close to each other that the road looked like the scales of a monster. And again, a huge fish swam along the river swallowing the reflection of the moon, which sauntered gracefully among the rocks, swaying to and fro like a pendulum; the sky was weirdly black. The dreams troubled him, absurd as they were.

Finally rid of the presence of his mother, and with only the cook, who was quiet as a cat, he was still uneasy. He felt that everything about him was asking, "Well, what are you going to do now?"

Mironoff noticed that all the people in the street looked at him in precisely the same way as the inanimate objects in his own room, as if they expected something of him.

One Sunday, after sunset, he was seated on a barge in the river, fishing for perch. The barge was half-submerged, and almost surrounded by ice. In the distance he could hear the brass trumpets of the band. The slow ripple of the water and the strains of music soothed his troubled mind; warm waves of sound lifted him aloft, gently, soothingly. To his keen senses the river hummed a bass that nearly drowned out all other sounds. His ear was sensitive as his eye, and the subtle sound seemed to become visible. He was so intent upon listening that he was startled to see a boat draw up alongside, and hear a voice inquire:

"Are they biting?"

He started and drew his line out of the water. A perch wriggled on the hook.

"See! I've brought you luck! Got many?"

"Three — with this."

The newcomer was Lisa Rosanova, clad in a mauve-colored dress, her hair tied with a bow of sky-blue silk. She was sitting in the stern of the little boat, while her friend Claudia, a fat black-haired girl in a red blouse and a dark-blue skirt, was at the oars. Claudia lazily manœuvred these in order to prevent the boat from floating with the current. Lisa smiled. Mironoff tried to smile back at her, but remembering his teeth, pressed his lips tight together.

"Let's go on!" said Lisa after a moment, and Claudia sat back and dropping the oars deep into the water, pulled. One oar broke and the water splashed Mironoff's feet.

"Oh, excuse me!"

Lisa broke into a light tinkling laugh, while Mironoff dangled his wet feet in embarrassment. Stupid of me, he thought to himself as he shook the water from his clothes; anyone else would have been glad of this chance to talk with her, but I — Maybe they even splashed me on purpose, in order to strike up an acquaintance?

Meantime the boat floated down-stream with the current, the oar-locks screeching in mockery. Mironoff shook himself, emptied his pail, took up his rod and fish, and went home. All the way back he pitied himself. As he approached his house he noticed that the brown paint on the front, the green shutters and the gate posts was fading and here and there peeling off.

"That must be painted," he mused.

Early on the morning of the following Wednesday a bald little fellow with an aggressive and sarcastic manner, began to scrape the house, while his assistant, a snub-nosed youngster smeared with paint, helped him. The old man sang softly as he worked:

He went away without saying goodbye

The boy chimed in with his shrill treble:

And gave his love to another.

Mironoff, roused from sleep, lay in his warm bed and thought: "How silly. The old fellow's too old to sing about love, and the other is too young. Why the deuce do house painters always sing when they work?"

A few days later, the painter was instructed to tint the façade sky-blue, and when Ivan Ivanovitch Rosanoff came by he stopped in the middle of the street and exclaimed in a stern voice:

"What are you doing over there?"

"I'm doing what I'm ordered to do," replied the other.

"But why blue?"

"I've been told to paint it blue."

"It spoils the appearance of the whole street."

"What's it to me?"

"Stupid!"

"I'm not the stupid one."

Mironoff, who was watering the flowers on his window-sill, had overheard this conversation, and was deeply hurt. Why did sky-blue spoil the appearance of the street, and why was he stupid? Little chance of that man's allowing me to have his daughter! He quickly came out into the street, looked at the other houses, whose fronts were washed out and faded by sun and rain, and saw gray fences joining one with the other. A line of white willows, with dusky foliage, descended straight to the river in two long lines, like beggars, seven on one side, ten on the other. Among the seven stood the one-storied brick house belonging to Rosanoff, its four windows peering grimly into the street. Looking up at his own house,

he saw that the triangle under the gable was already painted. It shone pleasantly with an oily lustre, like soft silk. There stood Rosanoff, and just touching his cap with one forefinger, he turned to Mironoff, saying:

"It's unpractical, that color."

"But it's beautiful."

"And expensive."

"But it wears well."

"I'm not so sure of that."

"The painter says so."

"Painters are liars," said Rosanoff sternly and turned away, offering to the sun the broad expanse of his benevolent countenance and silvery beard. Mironoff had had no time to ask why all painters were liars. He went indoors, took a book from the shelf and sat down by the window. Rosanoff reappeared an instant later with a broom and began sweeping the litter from under his windows out into the middle of the street. The painter shouted, "Hey, what are you raising all that dust for? You'll spoil this paint." Without deigning to reply, Rosanoff went on sweeping. Mironoff knew well enough that it was done purposely. And that hurt. He got up, went into his garden and sat down under an aged apple-tree.

"No, he won't let me marry his daughter. Why did I have the house painted anyway?" He could still hear the painter and Rosanoff arguing. He knew he ought to go out and put an end to it, but he felt paralysed. People were always pestering each other —. He remained seated until supper time. That night it was stifling hot and he could not sleep. The moon was inconsiderately bright and the dogs kept up an incessant din. On the floor near his bed was a golden yellow square of light, over which the window bars cast clear shadows. Suddenly three other lines moved across the spot and then the outline of a man. It was as though a lamplighter had glided past in the sky, carrying a ladder on one shoulder. Mironoff heard a rustling sound, then words. He pushed back his blanket, sat up and watched the window. There was a ladder immediately outside. Evidently the painter had forgotten to take it down and someone was trying to steal it. Mironoff jumped out of bed, approached the window, and looked up: on the top of the ladder was a man: he could see the bare feet. He was rather startled, and very much surprised. He crept noiselessly out of the room, went downstairs and walked quickly into the street.

There, in full view, stood a man on the top of the ladder, dipping a short brush into a paint pot that hung from his belt, hurriedly daubing at the wall round the garret window.

"Who's that?" said Mironoff in an undertone. With uncanny swiftness the man almost slid down the ladder, paint spilling from the pot and streaming down the walls. A strong smell of tar permeated the tepid air. Snatching up his ladder, the man tried to run away, but Mironoff had

already recognised him. It was Kallistrat. Standing back a little, he looked up again and read what had been written under the gable. He saw large letters, sprawling and indistinct, spelling the words, THE HOUSE. Dark streams of tar softly trickled down from every letter, and occasionally he could hear a heavy thud as the large drops struck the ground below. The carpenter, holding his ladder on one shoulder, stood some distance away.

"Look here," began Mironoff, "what did you do that for?" The other made no answer.

"Incredible! Can't you mess around with anything but sour cream or tar?" Kallistrat laughed. There was something sinister in that laugh; it sounded like a cross between the cackling of a hen and the bark of a puppy. It was uncanny. Incomprehensible. The stifling air, the strange glint of the moonlight on the windows — queer — like a bad dream.

"You'd better not try to fight," said the carpenter, "or I'll give you a proper hiding."

"I have no intention of fighting," said Mironoff, moving toward his gate. Kallistrat, laying the ladder down against the fence, stepped toward Mironoff.

"Are you angry with me?" he asked. There was a new note in his voice; it reminded him of his father: he seemed to threaten and caress at the same time.

"No, I'm not angry, but . . . Why ruin things like that?" The carpenter now stood at his side and lightly struck him on the shoulder.

"Don't be offended, Mironoff. I'll make it right for you. The tar won't stick to oil, anyway. That's why it runs so. I didn't do it right. I ought to have mixed soot with paraffin——"

"But why?"

"For fun, don't you see? It was a queer idea your painting your house blue. No one does that, don't you see?" The carpenter bit his lower lip, jerked his head to one side and half closing his eyes looked interrogatively at the sky. He was evidently trying to think something out. He then pulled a wooden cigarette-case from his pocket, struck a match, lit his cigarette and threw the match up so cleverly that the fire continued to burn. With one hand on Mironoff's shoulder, he compelled him to sit down on a bench beside the gate and, himself sitting by his side, began to address him in a patronizing manner:

"Of course, I understand your intention; you want to seem different from other people. You think that because you are independent and have no family, you can do as you like, don't you? Do all sorts of queer things? But I advise you to stop, Mironoff: there are only two of us who can play that game, I and the Devil. You are still a nonentity, and so far as God's concerned——"

"What God?" inquired Mironoff sullenly.

"Same old God, my boy. There's only one. Have you forgotten? See here now: suppose your mother is dying — well, any human being, let's say. All the neighbors seem interested. They come buzzing about. Well, all I have to do is to start painting the fence with sour cream and they all hustle over to watch me. See?"

"No. I see nothing. It all sounds like rubbish to me."

"Well, you're no good if you don't see. And yet, you want to push forward. Let me tell you, you've got to be able to understand rubbish as well as anything else. Now, can you think up something like that sour cream idea of mine? There — you see! Now, I've been tested, tried for my pranks. Why, I once poured paraffin into a letter box, and threw in a lighted match. The letters were all burned up, and no one ever suspected I did it. It got into the papers. People wondered why anyone would set fire to letters. It was all foolishness, of course, youthful high spirits. Why, I used to lie awake nights thinking what I could do that was different. Even now I like to mystify people. They're so funny! They go along so quietly, and then all of a sudden something strange happens. They're upset, puzzled."

The carpenter twirled the ends of his moustache, passed the tip of his tongue over his lips, half-closed one eye and, looking up at the moon, said with a sigh:

"A beautiful star, but dogs don't care for it."

His eyes intent upon the sharp lines of the face of the carpenter and listening to every word he said, Mironoff wanted to do two things: to ask questions, and to say something insulting and leave the fellow. But what he said was:

"Maybe the dogs think it's a fox?"

"No one knows what dogs think," replied the carpenter with a grim smile, and went on talking as though he were preaching a sermon; but his words became more and more vague and incomprehensible. His boasting made a considerable impression on Mironoff, the words he uttered were like the words he read in the French grammar, dark and wonderful. Round him the moonlight flooded the thick foliage of the willows and touched his curly head with gold. His eyes looked green, mocking and sly, the pupils seemed to have been pricked with a needle. One could not trust a man with such eyes. The fellow was obviously making game of him.

"I think you're a lunatic!" The words came from Mironoff in spite of himself, and surprised him.

"Really?" asked the carpenter, laughing.

"What was it you were writing up there on the house?"

"I just began, but you interrupted me. What I wanted to write was 'The House of a Lunatic.' Why, everyone in the street would have roared

with laughter in the morning. See here, Mironoff," he continued, tapping the other on the knee, "suppose you let me have ten roubles?"

Mironoff drew away angrily.

"Now wait, don't be offended. I have a wonderful idea. I rather like you. The way you behaved just now: anyone else would have made a terrible fuss. Well, anyway, I want to do you a good turn." He had become serious, though Mironoff was now quite convinced that he was mad. That would account for his mischievous ways. He smiled to himself, for this notion comforted him, and looking into the sky listened to the soft words of Kallistrat:

"I'll buy paint and paint your house so that the whole town will positively gasp. I've been longing to do something of that kind."

"But why?"

The carpenter seemed not to have heard, and continued:

"I tell you, there's nothing I don't know how to do, but I hate to work. That's because what I can get is not to my taste. Now, *you*——"

"Very well," agreed Mironoff, for he realized that Kallistrat would be up to some other prank if he refused him his way in this. But immediately the carpenter drew away and looked at Mironoff in amazement.

"Well! That's — Well, you'll not repent. I'll return in the morning." He turned and walked briskly away, then stopping as though he had stumbled, exclaimed to himself: "That's it! How they'll gasp!" Mironoff could see the black outline of the fellow clearly silhouetted against the silvery river. Then he turned a corner and disappeared. Mironoff stepped out into the middle of the street again, glanced up at his house and read the words "The House," then turned, went indoors and retired, thinking to himself:

"Yes, a lunatic, and probably a rascal into the bargain."

Early in the morning the cook came to say that the carpenter had arrived and wanted money. So it was not a dream. He gave the old woman the ten roubles and sank back into bed again. Ought he not to bring an action against the fellow?

This was not a bad idea: he kept thinking of it as he left the house on his way to the office and noticed the great black smudges. The tar had run down in places to the ground, so that the word House was hardly decipherable. He walked quickly down the street, uncomfortably conscious of the smiles of passers-by. Lisa, too, was doubtless laughing. — There are no wooden houses in Paris, though!

When he returned at five in the evening, he saw from a distance a group of youngsters by his gate, and a ladder propped against the front of the house. From the top of it hung a queer looking tin can. With one leg inside the garret window, the carpenter swayed to and fro. Shaking his cane, Mironoff quickened his pace and running up to the ladder, shouted at Kallistrat:

"See here. What the devil! I forbid you ——"

The youngsters, who had greeted him at first with shrieks of excitement, were silent and drew away toward the fence. Mironoff was quivering with anger as he looked up at the wicked eyes of Kallistrat. He was ready to burst with anger and shame. The carpenter slid down the ladder with extraordinary agility, pushed Mironoff aside with his shoulder and pointed aloft with his brush.

"What are you shouting for? Don't you like it, eh?"

The frame of the garret window had been removed and on the wall to one side of it was a crude picture of a huge monster painted yellow and white, with red fins, but without a tail; the large protruding red eyes were surrounded with white circles. The thing was peering into the gaping window. Its snout was a cross between that of a fish and a sheep.

"There will be three of them," explained the carpenter, "one opposite and another on top. The window will be painted to look like a fish-trap." He was apparently drunk. His hand trembled, but Mironoff smelt no liquor on his breath. Maybe the paint was too strong? Kallistrat was smeared from head to toe. His gray eyes burned with a strange light.

"Well," he asked, "isn't it lovely?"

The youngsters had begun to jeer again. A beggar walked up to Mironoff, made a deep bow and extended a filthy hand. A shaggy dog was with him, its tongue hanging out and its head on one side critically regarding the scene, as though it, too, were perplexed by the brilliant fresco above. Amid the din Rosanoff's voice was heard:

"Is this going to be a side-show, eh?"

Mironoff turned quickly round, as Rosanoff continued: "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, young man. You must put an end to this indecent behavior!" Mironoff felt weak. He did not understand. He turned to Kallistrat, and asked plaintively:

"Did you hear that?"

The carpenter showed his contempt by a gesture, as he answered:

"Everyone has a right to paint his house as he likes," and turned again toward the ladder. Mironoff held him back.

"Please don't go on. People will laugh."

"I'll see they don't laugh at me!"

"But after all, this is my house," urged Mironoff, who began to feel terrified.

"Tell them to go to the devil!" said the carpenter, now half-way up the ladder. "Oh, they'll gasp, you just see!"

Overwhelmed with dizziness, anger and shame, Mironoff went indoors and determined to lodge a complaint. He sat at his table, trying to think, and began to write. But the ink was thick, the pen was bad, and he found himself writing "dement" instead of "detriment." He threw away the pen and got up with the intention of going over to see Rosanoff and asking his

advice. He put on his Sunday clothes, brushed his hair, left the house cautiously in order to avoid Kallistrat, and crossed the street. But as he looked over his shoulder from Rosanoff's front yard he perceived that the carpenter had seen him and was now standing bolt upright on the ladder.

"He's only ruining the outside today," thought Mironoff, "but tomorrow he may set fire to it. What am I to do?"

"Well, what do you want?" asked Rosanoff with a growl as he stood on his porch smoothing his shaggy eyebrows. Taking off his cap, Mironoff hurriedly explained his errand. He was offended and at the same time ashamed. A ray of sunlight shone directly in his eyes, making him shift uneasily from one foot to the other. To make matters worse, his new suspenders squeaked. Rosanoff looked at him like a new priest in his pulpit preparing to begin his sermon. Was there something wrong about his appearance, he wondered? Why was he not asked to come indoors?

"I hardly see the purpose," began Rosanoff scornfully, "of your hiring that rascal over there. If he lived in the country, the people would have sent him to Siberia long ago. Justice slumbers. People are allowed to do just as they like."

Inside the house, through the window, Mironoff saw a familiar face. He was seized with the desire to say something important, striking, so he blurted out: "I think he's mad."

"Well, it's your own affair. Go on thinking. I have nothing more to say."

This was most embarrassing. With a deep bow, that made the suspenders squeak worse than before, he stole another glance at the window. Was it possible that Lisa had heard the squeak? Then she disappeared. How silly! He came out again into the street. Kallistrat had descended and stood there pulling his yellow beard, looking up in admiration at his work.

"No good," he stated, "it's all wrong."

"All wrong," echoed Mironoff.

"Too bad!" With a curse he went on to explain: "And I had such a wonderful idea. I wanted that fish — I like fish, but I ought to have stuck to flowers. I'm very good at that. Hares, too ——"

A ray of hope came to Mironoff, and he took Kallistrat by the arm and led him to the gate. "Look here," he said.

"What am I to look at? I'm ashamed of myself, Mironoff. Have you got some vodka? Good! Now I promise to paint it all over for you. Don't worry, old chap!"

The hope vanished. He called to Pavlovna through the kitchen window to bring vodka, and sat down on the bench, the carpenter squatting on a step below, his elbows resting on his knees, his fingers stuck in the great shock of hair. The cook brought out a bottle of vodka and a piece of meat-pie.

"Tell me, Mironoff," said Kallistrat, "have I really made a laughing-

stock of you? Here I've spent your money, and yet you are decent to me. You give me food and drink ——"

"I don't know," said Mironoff, who was busy thinking how he could dissuade Kallistrat from going on with the work.

The carpenter gulped down two glasses of vodka. "People," he said philosophically, "are either spiders — or fools. A kind man is always a bit of a fool."

This angered Mironoff, but he could think of nothing to say but what his father had once said: "God loves fools."

"You're right, you poor orphan. God is not without a certain craftiness. I've thought it all out. You're very fortunate to have found me. I'll be your friend for life. Why, you have caused my soul to blush for shame. It's your meekness that's done it —." His greenish gray eyes grew moist and his countenance became ecstatic. He pressed his fingers into the corners of his eyes, forcing out the tears. Though he was at first merely bored, Mironoff found that the genuine sentiment expressed by these tears was touching. The carpenter then wiped his fingers with his handkerchief, quite drenched in vodka, and looked up blinking strangely. Mironoff saw great beads of perspiration on the man's forehead and without realizing what he did, took his own handkerchief and wiped them off. It was now Kallistrat's turn for amazement.

"Why did you do that?" he asked, smiling.

"Perspiration."

The carpenter laughed softly, and stamped.

"Am I a baby that needs to have its face wiped?"

"I didn't think."

"No, you're a — well, never mind. I'll paint it over in the morning, don't worry."

"I beg you, don't do that."

"What!"

"No, no, don't."

The carpenter heaved a sigh, rose, and offered his hand. "Forgive me," he said, and sauntered away limping, as though one of his legs had suddenly gone lame. He stopped at the gate, peered back into the yard, turned again and carefully closing the gate, disappeared. Mironoff sat motionless. He was utterly perplexed. He tried, he wanted only to forget. Though the problem of the painting of the house had been quietly settled, he was not happy.

"What an impossible man!" he thought.

Late in the evening, Mironoff came out into the garden and lay in the grass under the apple-tree, looking at the sky through a network of leaves. Why was it that this stifling heaviness should come from that icy blue chalice of the heavens? The pale crescent moon was rapidly declining over the tip of the tree. The voices of men weary with labor and heat floated

to him from a distance. The sound annoyed him: he liked silence, unbroken, when he could feel his body borne aloft on the wings of thought, sweet harmonious thought, with no sound to interrupt. At such moments the earth and everything on it seemed to dissolve, floating off in slow waves and circles and disappearing utterly into space. He himself seemed to echo every sound in his disembodied spirit. Nothing was so marvelous as this loosening of the fleshly bonds, this mingling with the odors, as it were, of earth and stars, of the Supreme Being, infinitely tender, the source of intoxicating music. The idea of God on a golden throne, surrounded by Cherubim and Seraphim singing Hosannahs failed to satisfy him. The God worshipped in the temples of men, millions of whom daily invoked His name for help, was not his God. He vaguely suspected that this God had long since forsaken men, and a new God, a mocker, a clever scamp very much like the Devil, had taken his place. When he tried to visualize the maker of the music of the world, his virgin mind evoked the image of a nude woman emerging from a blue mist, that set him tingling with a tremulous desire; his heart beat faster and he felt as though he were rapidly falling to the earth from a great height: the symphony of sounds ceased and during this eerie flight he recalled all the young girls and women who had ever entered his life. This sensation he rarely experienced, but when it came it was unpleasant, fearful, shameful. He never consciously evoked the image of the woman of the starry heights.

On this particular evening he was unable to produce the sensation of levitation which had always been so easy. In spite of himself other ideas came to him, questions were asked him, demanding answers. *Had* Lisa heard the screech of his new suspenders? Her father was a disagreeable person who hated his fellow-beings, judging them with severity, interfering in their lives. Doubtless that was why he was universally respected. . . . How was one to live in order to keep others from interfering? The figure of the carpenter rose clearly before him, demanding explanations. How stupid! Mironoff closed his eyes in an effort to forget, made himself more comfortable and began to recite in an undertone the dialogue from a play he had just been reading:

"Oh, yes, in a way.
A bull can be pleasanter than an eagle.
Bull? You mean me?
Yes, sir, with your permission.
I am insulted.
Well, what of it?
I am insulted, I say.
It seems to me that Nature has insulted you, far more cruelly than I have.
Nature has made me a nobleman.
Then it is the nobility that is insulted."

"The yard is choked with weeds. It's been neglected!" It was the carpenter who had spoken. Kallistrat stood at Mironoff's side, wearing a loose shirt, the tail of which dangled round his trousers. He was barefoot, and by the look of his hair you would have thought he had just risen from bed. Mironoff raised himself on one elbow.

"How in the world did you ——?"

"I climbed over the fence. I really must tell Artamoshka to look after the garden and yard. He likes that kind of work. And we can let him play around here in the evenings." Kneeling before Mironoff, Kallistrat extended a hand to him, saying: "Here's what's left of the money. I paid six roubles for the paint and the two brushes. I'll give you them if you like. You may be able to use them."

"I don't want them," said Mironoff with a touch of annoyance.

"Well, neither do I," and the carpenter laid the money on the ground, sat down by Mironoff's side and looked him in the eyes.

"What are you thinking about?"

"Nothing."

"About girls, eh?"

"No."

"You must be careful with the girls," he pursued, picking a dry weed and scratching his forehead. "One of the bold kind will soon get the upper hand, and with the soft clinging variety you'd both soon be under water."

"I won't answer him," said Mironoff to himself, rocking to and fro on the grass, "then he'll go."

"I've been thinking a lot about you, Mironoff. You know, you've touched me, penetrated me through and through. Disturbed my peace of mind. What was that you were mumbling when I came, sorcery?"

"Oh, nothing: some poetry."

"I'm surprised, Mironoff."

"I don't want to surprise anyone."

"But you do." This was spoken almost as a threat. What could one say to such a man?

"It is very hot," ventured Mironoff.

"It is. But tell me what you are thinking of?"

"I don't like to think. I like everything to be quiet and restful." He tried to appear angry, but he felt guilty. "You see," he added, "how clear and quiet the sky is, but when the clouds —." He did not complete the sentence, conscious that though he was speaking in a loud voice the words had a plaintive sound. The carpenter, meantime, stealthily looking up into the heavens, remarked:

"The sky, Mironoff, is empty. That's why it's quiet."

"But what about the sun and moon and stars? Maybe there's something there we don't see?"

The carpenter shook his head dubiously. "I don't suppose you believe in God," he said, "you don't go to church."

Mironoff wanted to say something offensive, but could only mutter:

"My father did not believe in God."

"There are lots of people like that."

"He said that all thoughts and ideas served only to cast a shadow over everything."

"You don't say! He said that?"

"Yes, and now I can see for myself: thoughts are like worms. You dig them in the ground; they begin to squirm and wriggle ——"

The carpenter was now pulling up blades of grass, listening attentively.

"Come to think of it," he said, "there are really two souls in you: one that's wise, and one that mixes everything up. I don't want to think. The soul abhors thought."

"There you're wrong, Mironoff."

"But what is there to know?" He thought he might frighten the carpenter, perhaps even offend him, drive him away for good and all. "There is nothing we don't know: people are born, marry, have children, and die. There are fires, thefts, murders. Circuses. Church processions. Somebody's wife elopes. Drunken brawls. Sour cabbage cooking, cucumbers being salted. Gambling. My God, what is it all to me!"

"Well," asked the carpenter, "what do you want?"

"Quiet."

"Then you ought to have been born deaf. It's hard to make you out, Mironoff."

"I don't ask you to make me out." Was this offensive? he wondered, looking stealthily at the carpenter, who quietly gesticulated with his hands, watching the shadow that fell from the tree. Mironoff, with a sigh, extended his hands toward the rays from the moon. They both sat this way for some time, hands stretched out like blind beggars. It was the carpenter who first broke the silence:

"No, Mironoff, nothing you can say or do surprises me. Words can't, and as for your blue house, why that only makes me laugh."

"Confound you! Go to the devil! Why are you forcing yourself on me?"

But Kallistrat only smiled, shook his head and winked:

"Temper, eh?" And he smiled with infinite good-humor, readjusted the leather band on his forehead, lighted a cigarette, and slowly puffed the blue smoke into the still air. "I understand, Mironoff, you're bored. Your youth is to blame for that. You're not used to life yet. You must have pleasures. Girls are all very well in their way, but for a serious man, what they have to give doesn't endure. Indeed, there are very few sources of enjoyment anywhere." The dictatorial tone in which this was spoken again aroused Mironoff's ire: such things from an illiterate workingman!

"Everything must be changed!" he went on.

"In politics, you mean?" asked Mironoff.

"No. I have no interest in politics. I am aiming to create a work out of

my soul, something perfect, different from anything else, that will make people gasp."

"Why not bite the Governor's ear?" suggested Mironoff.

"What did you say?" asked the carpenter, blinking his eyes.

"Bite the Governor. In church, during the service. Everyone will gasp at that."

"Don't be angry," said Kallistrat, striking his knee with his hand. "You are an interesting chap, I do declare. A bit muddle-headed, but interesting. Everyone in this world is bored, and wants to do something to surprise himself and others, but the trouble is there's no opportunity. And people don't know how to go about it. Now, you'd better stop trying to think of it. Your mind doesn't work right. And you don't know how to explain yourself. Go to bed. He who sleeps, wants not."

Poking the butt of his cigarette in the soft earth, he jumped up, and without saying goodbye made his way to the fence, repeating in a tone of mockery, "He who sleeps, wants not."

Listening to the creaking of the fence as Kallistrat climbed over it, Mironoff kept thinking, "He won't come again — he's offended. That was an inspiration of mine, telling him to bite the Governor."

He pictured to himself the vast bald head and protuberant ears of His Excellency, emerging out of a cloud of blue incense at church; he saw the carpenter steal up cautiously and seize one crimson ear with his teeth. The congregation rises in consternation with one great gasp. The candles flicker as the rash carpenter is seized, dragged off, and given a thrashing ——

Mironoff burst out laughing, but suddenly stopped on hearing a noise over by the fence. It was probably Kallistrat, playing the spy on the other side. He rose, and pretending to cough, slipped into the house without once looking back.

Next morning, on stepping out into the street he discovered that the monster by the garret window had been painted over with a heavy coat of blue, but of so dark a shade as to make the windows look unnaturally heavy. The splotches of tar that had disfigured the façade were also all covered over, but here again the new paint had ruined the appearance of the house.

"So he has kept his word!" thought Mironoff, and wondered how it had been accomplished. It must have been hard. With a shake of the head, he went in to dinner. He had scarcely sat down when the front gate banged and the teamster Artamon, a scythe and a spade swung over one shoulder, rolled heavily into the yard, stopped on the porch, laid down his implements, crossed himself, spat on his hands, took up his scythe again and swung it as lightly as though it had been his whip. He descended into the yard and began cutting the grass and weeds. Mironoff rose hurriedly, and hiding behind the window, looked on.

"Why, they seem to think the place belongs to them!" he mused. He

could clearly discern the fierce-looking teeth of the teamster glistening in the triangle of his mouth; the crafty bear's eyes, almost invisible under his overarching forehead; the large nose nearly buried in the moustache, and the queer straggly beard. It seemed unnatural. Artamon had practically no face at all. He plodded on, as though cutting his way through an invisible though almost impenetrable thicket.

"So that's it. Kallistrat uses Artamon in order to make people gasp——"

It was not long before Artamon had cut all the high grass. He paused in a corner of the yard, held his scythe like a lance, looked up at the sky and crossed himself again. Mironoff took him a glass of vodka, a cutlet, and a loaf of bread, and thanked him.

"Thank you," repeated the teamster in an almost inarticulate murmur, threw back his head, tossed the vodka into his misshapen mouth, poked in half the loaf of bread together with the meat, glanced at what was left and then forced that in after the rest, swallowed it all and sat down.

"Now for the back garden," he said thickly.

"How much are you charging for this job?"

"Nothing. I'm doing it for the fun of it." And he trudged off.

Looking into the garden an hour later, Mironoff saw that all the grass had been mowed. Artamon was reclining under the apple-tree, stroking the roots with his hand. Catching sight of Mironoff, the teamster shouted,

"Hey there, you!"

Mironoff went out to him, but when he was some distance off, he stopped in alarm at the tone of Artamon's voice.

"You're a fine landlord! See that lichen! And all these caterpillars! These trunks should have been sprayed. These trees ought to have been dug out around the roots; they need fertilizer. You're a fine one, you are!"

As Mironoff approached, the teamster extended one hand, the fingers outstretched, covered with the slime of many dead caterpillars. Mironoff shuddered with disgust and drew back.

"What are you afraid of? Me? Why, I'm your friend. Kallistrat told me to come over. What are you shaking for? You're queer, you and the rest of 'em——"

He spoke very loud, and the disagreeable impression of his speech was intensified by his lisp, which was not unlike that of a young child.

"I'll make it right," he continued. "I like to work." He wiped his hand on one boot, groaning as he stooped. Mironoff regarded him with awe and, not knowing just what to say, timidly inquired:

"Where is the carpenter?"

"Oh, Kallistrat? Don't go near him. He's mad, the old rascal, because you didn't let him paint your house." Opening his mouth as far as he could, the teamster sighed three times. It sounded like the winter wind moaning in a chimney, and made Mironoff want to pull his head down between his shoulders like a turtle.

"You are stronger than he," he said.

"Of course I am. I was once in the circus. I wrestled. The dirty dogs broke my fingers, or I'd have had them all down. They beat me by cunning, not by strength." He turned and plunged his spade into the hard earth as though it were made of butter, turning over the dark sod about the roots of the apple-tree.

"Everybody's afraid of me here because I'm so strong. But I'm a quiet fellow, kind to everybody. I like to talk to people. Of course my voice scares them. . . . Last year my cart ran over a man — his leg it was. I was arrested. When I was tried the judge screamed at me: 'Don't shout so,' he said, but I couldn't help it. When he understood that, he acquitted me."

"Are you married?"

"Good God, is any woman fool enough to marry me? Look at my lip." Mironoff knew that the townspeople regarded all peasants with mingled hostility and contempt. Both his father and mother had inculcated that attitude in him from his earliest childhood. But as for Artamon he felt only fear and astonishment, and a vague sense of hope. If he made friends with this peasant, then the carpenter ——

"Working, is he?" the resounding voice of Kallistrat boomed from above. He was sitting on one of the fence posts, smoking a cigarette, his legs dangling, his head encircled by a wreath of blue smoke.

"Hang it all!" muttered Mironoff to himself, "is he going to start ragging me again?"

"Look here, Krinkoff," he began, straightening himself up to his full height, "now what do you want? I don't care to —." But he could not speak clearly. Something caught in his throat.

"What don't you care to — ?" inquired the carpenter.

"You'd better stop! I'll bring a complaint."

"Against me? What for?"

"The impassive attitude of the carpenter irritated him, and Mironoff stamped his foot as he shrieked:

"I don't care to have you digging and cutting my grass!"

Lightly as a bird, Kallistrat slid down from his position, seized Mironoff by the shoulder and giving him a gentle shake, spoke in impressive tones:

"Pull yourself together, d'you hear? Are you mad? Here you have people working for you for nothing. You ought to thank them."

Mironoff was ashamed of his sudden burst of temper. He felt as though he had been put in his place by the carpenter's hand. The teamster, standing to one side, opened his mouth wider than ever, and seemed to be waiting for something else to happen.

"I see," muttered Mironoff.

"You see, but nevertheless you yell."

"Of course, I'm very grateful ——"

"Well, you ought to be!" and the carpenter gave him a gentle push with his finger, and walked over to Artamon.

"Tie up those twigs, understand? And throw away those dead raspberry bushes."

"It's true," thought Mironoff, "they are working for nothing," and to show his gratitude he decided to invite them to a meal. Half an hour later the three of them were sitting at the kitchen table. The kettle was boiling on the stove, the vodka sparkled in the decanter, and on the table were plates of pickled mushrooms and sour cabbage. Artamon drank vodka and tea, very much as a calf sucks milk, and gobbled his food, grunting and snorting, while the carpenter extracted with his fork the tenderest mushrooms from the plate before him, lifted his glass with two fingers, and turning it to the light, wrinkling his nose and half closing his eyes, drank it down with a cluck. Every gesture was executed with the utmost ease and nimbleness. An unpleasant fellow, but withal very interesting. *Was* he quite right in his mind? Perhaps only an abnormally crafty man.

"If I like anyone I'll give him pleasure," he was saying, as he held his glass with two fingers and spread out the other three. "But I am forced to add, I don't care much for people. They're all fools."

"Ugh, you devil!" muttered Artamon, leaning back against the wall, his huge chest sticking out absurdly.

"Now, I'm a clever fellow," continued Kallistrat. "I'm capable, I can do anything because I know how. Simple things don't interest me——"

"Devil!"

Mironoff drank two glasses of vodka, though he did not relish the liquor, and soon felt as though his brain were swimming in a fog. He listened in silence to the boastful words of the carpenter, feeling only an exasperating sensation of boredom. He was deeply offended, too, when Artamon fell asleep and began snorting, though he waked up a moment later with a guilty start. Kallistrat meantime twirled the ends of his golden moustache, and addressed himself to the teamster:

"Now, home you go! You've had your fill, you camel."

At which Artamon rose obediently and went away. Kallistrat expressed a wish to inspect the rest of the house, and his host, with the same obedient alacrity shown by the teamster, rose and led the way into his well-lighted bed-room. It had one window opening onto the garden and another over the street. Kallistrat went to the bed, poked the mattress and murmured.

"Soft bed, that!" Then, with a glance at the books on the shelf, he asked, "Do you read them?"

"Yes."

"All?"

"Yes."

Mironoff thought he could detect a touch of sarcasm in these questions,

and could hardly keep his temper. They next went into a small drawing-room which was filled with flowers and various little ornaments which his father had made. Kallistrat stood stock-still in the middle of the room, and after a silence turned to Mironoff:

"You ought to get married."

Everything in the room seemed to protest against the intrusion of this bare-footed visitor. The very planks of the floor creaked, the lamp-chimney tinkled, the Sunday plate, a present to Mironoff's mother from her friends, jingled on the sideboard. Mironoff was offended by Kallistrat's casual attitude toward the unusual objects that surrounded him. He was surprised at nothing. He neither noticed nor praised.

"He envies me, that's what it is, and he pretends he doesn't care, the devil!" The tinkle of the glass sounded more loudly as the carpenter examined the globe.

"This is a globe?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Common. Imitation of the earth. But why out of brass?"

"It plays a tune."

"Can't be," said Kallistrat. "Show me how it works." Mironoff opened the cupboard, set the globe on the table and turned the crank. Some of the tiny spurs had come off, but there were enough left to afford an idea of what it must have been able to do:

Siskin, Siskin,
Where have you been?

The carpenter drew away from the table and listened.

"That *Siskin?*" he inquired.

"Yes," said Mironoff, with a sad smile as he thought of the past. Finally Kallistrat stopped him, and taking him by one hand, with the fingers of the other he poked at the continents and oceans outlined on the globe. Then he sat down.

"Where did you get that?" he asked thoughtfully.

"My father made it."

"Why does it play *Siskin?*"

"That's a nursery song. I was just a child at the time."

"I see," answered the other, putting the end of his beard into his mouth and chewing it reflectively. At last, blowing it out as though he was extinguishing a candle, he rapped the Arctic Ocean and grimly smiled.

"It's amusing. Though I might add that *Siskin* is scarcely appropriate. The globe is a means of education, and to have that tune suddenly start up — you see? Was your father clever?"

"Yes. And very gay."

"Hm! Odd creatures —" He began again examining the globe, poking it with his varnish-stained fingers. "It's simple, and yet full of wisdom. A

drop of water, a few clods of earth, and we're told it hangs suspended in space. Remarkable. And millions of people are said to live on that ball, eh? Do you believe that, you poor orphan?"

"Why not? I'm living on it, and so are you," he replied wearily.

"Well," said Kallistrat, rising and offering his hand, "many thanks. Good-night." On his way out he paused in the kitchen, clutched his beard in one hand and said grimly: "The whole thing no bigger than your head, and yet — Very remarkable. But I must say *Siskin* is inappropriate. Your father did that just to make people gasp, see? Same as whistling in church. It ought to have been Hosannah, or some other church tune, or else a military march. Bum, bum, bum — like that." And humming a martial air, he departed.

"Go to the devil!" Mironoff not only thought, but actually said it. When he took up the globe to return it to the cupboard, he noticed that a part of North America was split, and had actually fallen down and become part of South America. That fool Kallistrat had done it! Wetting the tip of one finger, he repaired the damage, and turned the globe in order to hear the tune once again. Was Kallistrat right about the little song? But what *would* be more appropriate? All other tunes seemed quite as unsuitable:

On a rather dirty street
Friend Ivan swayed along,
Rather drunk he —

Then there was his father's old favorite:

Seven sons, seven sons,
What shall we do with seven sons?

And what others besides?

I wish to tell you, tell you, tell you.

Ah, that piece of North America had come loose again. How odd to watch the scrap of blue paper curl up like a shaving.

"I'll mend it tomorrow with glue. Why, I wonder, did he say it ought to play Hosannah? Surely he doesn't believe in God? Any more than I do."

His elbows on the table, his forehead almost touching the globe, Mironoff surrendered himself to the flood of thoughts that beset him, slow, vague, unfamiliar.

The street urchins had thrown mud at the blue façade of the house, drawn pictures with chalk, and written indecent remarks wherever they could find a place. On the topmost panel of the gate someone — evidently an adult — had written the following words in lead-pencil:

"This house stands upside down. A fool, lives here."

When Mironoff first saw this he was grievously offended, but noticing

that the last comma was misplaced, clearly showing the writer's ignorance of grammar, he was greatly relieved. Fool yourself!

There was no doubt that the entire street had demonstrated with unmistakable emphasis its hostility to the blue house, but Mironoff felt no irritation. He was much too deeply concerned by something more serious: the carpenter and the teamster had fastened themselves upon him and were not to be shaken loose. They were like shadows. Artamon called nearly every afternoon to sweep the yard, chop wood, work in the garden and growl, while the carpenter, behaving as though he were lord of the place, took it upon himself to introduce various improvements, and even made suggestions to Pavlovna about her housekeeping. The old woman listened to his words in silence, but as soon as he left, would quickly make the sign of the cross. Mironoff had often noticed this performance, and had only smiled at the woman's simplicity. His hatred for Kallistrat became intensified. That fellow was somehow destroying his dreams of a sky-blue life, raising before him a barrier of apprehension, and putting him, Mironoff, into the background. One day he summoned up all his courage to say to Kallistrat:

"This is all utter nonsense."

"You try and see if you can live without nonsense!" returned Kallistrat. Mironoff began to regard the intruder with feelings almost of fear. There was something abnormal about his agility. He remembered the day Kallistrat had hopped down from the garden wall like a bird. A presentiment of something out of the ordinary settled upon Mironoff's mind and oppressed him. He recalled the day when Kallistrat had made the floor creak and the glass tinkle. Why was it that every time he came in the same thing occurred? Mironoff did not believe in sorcery, but he had heard and read about persons who possessed mysterious powers, and could not escape the conviction that perhaps the very next day the carpenter would reveal his gifts in some terrible way.

It happened quite unexpectedly. On Sunday evening Kallistrat came in bringing a young girl with him. She was plump and had very fat legs. She wore a scarlet silk blouse. Her fine teeth glittered whenever she opened her mouth, which was small. Her cheeks glowed with a slightly purple flush. On one of the fingers of her left hand sparkled a pink stone set in a ring. Her eyes, it seemed to Mironoff, reflected the tint of the stone; they looked like the eyes of a white mouse.

"Her name is Serafina," said Kallistrat, pushing her toward Mironoff. "A fine girl."

She smiled. There was a queer disagreeable odor that emanated from her. When she sat down, her white skirt, tightly drawn over her large hips, slipped up, revealing a pair of round legs. She shuffled her shoes restlessly over the floor, and stamped with her heels. Her dark hair was brushed back smoothly, the braid hanging sleekly down the back of her

neck. In it she had stuck a large yellow comb, which made her look like a hen.

"How awfully hot!" she exclaimed, fanning her flushed face with her handkerchief.

The carpenter was dressed in a gray sail-cloth suit, an embroidered blue shirt, and highly polished boots, into the tops of which he had thrust his trousers. His beard and golden hair appeared to have undergone a thorough cleaning, and danced like tongues of flame. His dry, hawk-like face was graver and more restless than ever; his green eyes sparkled malignantly, seeming to see and understand everything.

"She is not capricious," he explained, "and she understands housekeeping. You can see for yourself she has plenty of flesh on her bones."

"How do you like it?" asked the girl, pouring tea into the glasses — "Strong?"

Mironoff sat opposite her, leaning over the table. His eyes twitched, his lips trembled. He wanted to pull out his tongue and wet his lips as he had seen the girl do when she ate jam. But he forced himself to smile in order to show the woman his ugly and uneven teeth. Her lips were very red and thick. He observed her sucking the cherry-stones until they were white. Such lips might suck all the blood out of a man. The carpenter's words "plenty of flesh on her bones," and her question "Strong?", made him blush. He thought of dogs, and purposely knocked his spoon against the edge of his glass, and spilled tea over his trousers. Jumping up unceremoniously, he hurried out to the porch. It was drizzling outside; the warm earth quickly absorbed the moisture, and the foliage glistened. High above, dove-colored clouds were condensing the unbearable heat.

"He wants me to marry that woman," thought Mironoff, as he caught a few drops of rain in one outstretched palm. The odor of the girl's perspiration was still in his nostrils. Though he was filled with repulsion, another sensation arose, not altogether unpleasant.

The carpenter appeared the next moment on the porch.

"Did you burn yourself?" he asked.

"Now listen," began Mironoff in a hurried undertone, "I don't want to marry, and I advise you to give up this scheme." He remembered his mother's words and repeated them now with delight: "What kind of a husband would I make? Why, you said the same thing yourself. Take her away! I'll give her twenty-five roubles, and you may have fifty, if you like. I mean it."

His knees shook, he would almost have knelt to Kallistrat, who stood there smiling mercilessly and twisting the end of his beard:

"You're quite mad, Mironoff, my boy. Why, you've got to get married. You've buried yourself in your books, you dream away your life. You have a rush of blood to the brain. You're positively livid. Your lips are trembling. Why? I'm telling you why. It's time you lived according to law

and custom. I'll supply the wife, and you and she will supply the children."

"I can't. I don't want to ——"

"Of course you can. It's time you stopped trying to astonish people. That's not your line. Other people will only fool you." The carpenter took him by the arm, raised him up and shaking the rain from his clothes, went on: "I know human nature. People will pretend to your face that they think you remarkable, that they are interested in you, but at the same moment they'll rob and deceive you. That happens all the time, I tell you."

His eyes tight shut, Mironoff saw a vision of street urchins defacing sky-blue houses with mud. They were his children, all of them. His wife, this "fine girl," sat at the window munching apples and eating pie.

He was now sitting opposite Serafina and it seemed to him that she had become plumper than ever; her breasts heaved, making the stiff silk of her blouse rustle; her small round mouth gaped wearily. In her sausage-like fingers she clutched tightly her white cambric handkerchief, wiping the perspiration from her forehead. Her pink eyes melted in a smile. Her perspiration, thought Mironoff, must be as thick and oily as molasses, and no doubt neither flies nor mosquitoes would have the courage to attack her india-rubber body. Meantime the carpenter poured cherry-juice into his tea and gulped down the strong dark beverage. Shamelessly, boastfully he declared:

"What I like most is to arrange marriages. I'm fond of noise and excitement. I like rows. I enjoy watching people standing on their heads. It's funny to see young people falling in love." He said this without the shadow of a smile. Stealing a look in his direction, Mironoff noticed that his face was twitching. At that moment it was terrible to look upon. It was fortunate the carpenter had not worn his leather band round his head today.

"You must learn to enjoy life, Mironoff. Move about freely, you know. Learn to commit sins, there's no great harm in that. Are you accountable to anybody? Who's your master, tell me?"

"I don't know." There was something terrible about that question.

"There. You see? If it weren't for the presence of this girl, I'd tell you soon enough who ought to be your master. But she knows what I mean, the rogue! Don't you, Fimka?"

"I know nothing at all," answered the "fine girl," trying to speak according to the rules of etiquette. Mironoff felt something touch his foot, and a moment later two feet encircle it and hold it fast. Pulling away, he jumped up, exclaiming:

"What are you doing?"

The girl flushed scarlet. Kallistrat poked Mironoff in the side, laughing loudly:

"She knows! The rogue, she knows!"

It was only afterward that Mironoff could recall what had happened. The carpenter left the room with a laugh, while the girl approached Mironoff, smiling:

"You naughty man, why did you make me blush like that before my uncle?" She seated herself at his side and inquired if he liked giblet soup, to which Mironoff answered that in Paris giblets were thrown to the dogs; in that marvelous city people disliked such filthy messes as soaked apples. There the inhabitants were noble-minded folk, who never dreamed of forcing their way into other people's houses. Suddenly an unsuspected force brought him to his feet, made him dizzy and hot. By the time the fit was over the girl had disappeared and the carpenter re-entered, seized him by the hand and inquired in a tone that sounded infinitely remote:

"You fool! Why do you push the girl around this way? How dare you? She is my niece, not yet your wife. And this broken plate? What's happened to you?"

Mironoff listened in amazement. Though Kallistrat stood close by his side his voice seemed to come from under the floor. Bits of broken cups crunched under the soles of his shoes; everything in the room swayed.

"You can't stand wine, I see. Don't drink it." Kallistrat offered him a glass of bluish-looking water, as Mironoff peered into his eyes. . . .

On awaking next morning he thought he had only dreamed of the "fine girl." He had actually dreamed of a fox, a large fawn-colored animal running round amid the stars, licking them. This had brought on a suffocating darkness that swallowed up the entire earth. Far off on the horizon one lone ray of light remained, but even there the stars were being wiped out by the lilac-colored priest Boris, who was swinging a censor bearing the following inscription: "To Let. Room for a Single Man."

This dream had terrified him, and immediately on waking up, Mironoff started to the kitchen for a drink of water, but on his way he stepped into something slimy on the floor. He returned to bed, tormented by thirst, and unable to sleep. Sitting up again, he saw that what he had stepped into was cherry jam. It was all over one foot and had stained the sheet. He looked at the floor and was sorrowfully convinced that the events of the night before were not a dream.

"Tomorrow," he said to himself with a sigh, "I'll sell the house and all my belongings, go to Paris and rent a room. For a single man. I must learn to speak French." And he took down his grammar, opening it at random, and read this question:

"*Que savez-vous sur Bernardin de St. Pierre?*" Between the pages he discovered a pressed butterfly, which plunged him once again into mournful meditations. Suppose, he wondered, when he arrived at Paris, the people would begin asking him about St. Bernardin? He knew nothing about that Saint. . . . And, closing the book, he thrust it under his pillow,

laughing at the sudden delightful idea that had just come to him: how wonderfully convenient and pleasant it was to know only the strictly necessary words, and none of the others! This gave one the privilege of not understanding other people, not having to think of all they said. This was just the way to assure one of a quiet and peaceful existence. Yes, exactly, he thought as he watched the pendulum on the clock trying in vain to sever two nosegays of blue flowers that hung near it on the wall. But why wait to sell the house? Why not sell it at once? Surely, the carpenter would not be allowed to enter the walls of Paris.

He laughed in old Pavlovna's face as she entered noiselessly, and strode past her from room to room, making a rough estimate of the value of the furniture. Seven hundred roubles, perhaps — or was it four hundred? No, that's not right. And, correcting himself aloud, "One thousand one hundred" he said finally. It was amusing to say that rather than "eleven hundred"; there were more zeros, and that was a comfort. "Zeros, zeros," he muttered, as Pavlovna followed him, sternly ordering him to come and drink his tea. He drank one glass at last. The tea tasted bitter, and he determined to go out into the fields beyond the river, to lie all day on the sand among the juniper bushes, returning to sleep at a hotel. "Try and find me there, you idiot!" he growled. But he changed his mind after all, took his fishing-rods and went down to the river. As he passed the gate he looked up at the windows of the Rosanoffs' house and saw Lisa, who was wiping the window-pane. He went up to her and speaking swiftly, he said: "I simply must talk to you about Paris. Meet me this evening at the cemetery."

Lisa drew back without answering, but this did not trouble him: he was convinced that the girl would come.

He did no fishing that day, only lay on the bank looking up at the sky. That aroused neither anxiety nor meditation. He fell asleep from time to time, passing the day thus until the sun, swelling and reddening as it always did at dusk, stood just above the roof of the principal building of the insane asylum.

Returning home, he ate supper, changed into his Sunday clothes, and began to think: "The carpenter will come and ask where I am going. I had better go into the garden." But once on the porch, he stopped and sat down on the steps. Kallistrat would see him in the garden. "I'm clever and perspicacious: that's why I dislike thinking." He could see in the neatly kept garden the slightly protruding stubble left from the cut burdocks, sticking up like pipes. He could even see a mouse in one clump. The night was warm and damp. Mironoff could imagine that the pipes were softly playing the familiar strains of a cradle song, so softly that not even the mouse was startled. Before him rose the vision of a slim girl dressed in light blue; he could hear her voice. It was unusually pleasant, and though he did not catch the meaning of her words, it made no difference;

in fact it was all the more pleasant. He would sell his house to this girl's father, who would allow him to marry her. He would take her to Paris with him, to live in that room for a single man. . . .

He sat there a long time and was brought back to reality only by the sound of a tumult in the street. Evidently someone was being pursued. A voice brutally rent the silence of the evening, crying,

"Run back! Hold him!"

Mironoff jumped to his feet just as the kitchen clock struck eight. "It's time!" he said, "it's time!" He strode to the gate, walked down the street swinging his cane, and made his way to the sandy hillocks where the brick quadrangle of the cemetery wall rose to meet him. He could still distinguish the brass on the cross above the chapel. The cemetery was comparatively new, and had as yet few graves. Over the grounds pines and puny birches struggled for existence in the poor soil, not yet sufficiently fertilized by the bodies of the dead. The grass was gray, and stretched as far as the horizon. Mironoff slowly walked along the stony path, beset with ants bearing pine-needles. He took aim at one and struck at it with his cane, but missed.

"Very well," he said smiling, "live on, if you want to."

Over the wall he could see the strip of road along which Lisa was to come. Beyond it houses and gardens ran down to the river's edge. The river itself, coiling in and out like a leaden snake, at one place visible, at another hidden by trees or houses. At the tiny toy-like persons Mironoff shook his cane.

"You'll stay where you are, all of you, while I go to Paris! I'm sick of you all!"

The factory chimney on the far side of the river spat out clouds of smoke, dimming the evening sky, still tinged with red on the far horizon. A dark cloud, flourishing a tail, threatened the rest of the sky.

"Boredom!" He recalled the carpenter's words.

At that moment he saw the carpenter approaching, twirling his beard in one hand, and holding the other under his apron. He was walking with measured steps as though pacing off ground along the road. Mironoff's heart sank as he thought, "He's spying on me. Here he is, the minute I think of him!" Kallistrat advanced some distance, then turned sharply into the field, toward two aged fir-trees, as though leading himself by the beard.

"You won't deceive me," said Mironoff, crouching behind the wall and watching the carpenter. He was really afraid, and crouched still lower next to the warm bricks, spreading out his hands as though he were being crucified. Thrusting his fists into the holes left in the top of the wall, he wriggled his thumbs in the direction of the carpenter, muttering, "you won't deceive me. . . ." But Kallistrat had turned off again toward the road, making strange gestures, perhaps counting on his fingers. He stood

facing the street, the same street where Lisa was due to appear. What would happen? Something terrible of course. Mironoff wanted to scream.

But Lisa did not come. The carpenter took the leather band from his head, shook his golden mane, put the band on again and walked slowly down the road.

"He'll hide somewhere and then follow us," thought Mironoff. By now he realised he could not avoid Kallistrat, who would inexorably pursue him and force him to marry that "fine girl." He would become his slave, exactly as Artamon had become. Pressing his forehead hard against the bricks, he suddenly remembered the carpenter's question, "Who's your master?" And he recalled the loathsome laughter with which this was uttered. Surely he already considered himself Mironoff's master. Mironoff realised the importance of that idea which the girl had driven from his consciousness by those fat restless legs of hers: "Who really is my master?" He shuddered. "He knows there is no one to protect me, he knows it." . . .

Down there, near where Kallistrat lay hidden, he could see dense clouds of smoke, so thick that it seemed one might almost walk on them. "I like noise and excitement," Kallistrat had said. What noise? Just noise and movement, and that is wicked and stupid, like the lives of all the people in this town. The carpenter liked wickedness, that much was clear. He thought of the other things that had been said, and pondering them, discovered deep meanings. "You can't astonish people." Astonishing people, making them gasp, simply meant doing things differently. To be normal one must think of nothing except the commonplace; only in that way can one be sure of living unmolested. Apparently life is impossible without interference from the carpenter. The cunning fellow has discovered that the man who lives alone and has no master must be made his slave.

"Ha, they all call on God, but it's the carpenter who bosses, ordering people about as though they were dogs."

Such reflections were unwelcome, and Mironoff was sure they were put into his head by the malicious influence of Kallistrat. He had never felt this way before he knew the carpenter.

Gray masses of clouds crawled lazily high above the cemetery, covering the sky with dirty splotches of gray. It reminded him of the days when his mother in one of her drunken fits would go about the house wiping with a dirty rag the window-panes, cupboards, and mirrors.

There was moisture in the air as the last rays of light disappeared over the sandy graves. Mironoff at last stood up, and looked toward the road, but it seemed to have been swallowed up in the earth. Walking quickly, though endeavoring not to make too much noise as he passed over the stony path, he trudged home. As he came near his gate he perceived that there were still lights in the Rosanoff house. He ran up to one window

and tapped lightly against it with his cane. The round face of Claudia appeared and without the least embarrassment, Mironoff asked her to warn her friend against the carpenter.

"What?" asked the girl in a frightened whisper.

"He is watching." Claudia closed the window. Mironoff thought he heard a cry of terror behind that window, followed by a peal of laughter. Peering cautiously around, he crossed the street and entered his own yard. Something small and dark rose from the steps. He drew back.

"Who is there?" he asked.

"Me," answered Pavlovna. "The carpenter has been asking for you."

"I'm not at home!" he said, and then in a whisper, "I'm never at home any more!" He went into his room and without lighting the lamp, undressed and went to bed. He could not sleep. He was bothered by the mosquitoes. His heart was heavy, for he felt that the carpenter was not far away, perhaps out there in the garden, hiding behind the window out on the roof, twisting his beard in one hand and deciding what torture to inflict on the morrow. Throwing back the covers he sat bolt upright, his bare feet on the floor, listening. Not a sound but the soft patter of a light rain on the roof. The heat was oppressive. A stray mosquito whined. He took his pillow and sat holding it on his knee, waiting.

"I must kill that mosquito." He rocked to and fro wearily, and at last fell asleep, still holding the pillow. He awoke with a start, sat up again and listened. The gray dusk of dawn gradually penetrated the room, creeping in through the dark motionless leaves of the flowers on the window-sill. His head whirled with a multitude of memories, but he sat there waiting, mystified, silent, immobile. The sun rose and painted liquid pearls on the moist window-pane. Dazed, Mironoff rolled over and fell into a deep sleep. It seemed that he was roused only a moment later by a strange screeching sound in the direction of the door.

A man dressed in yellow entered the room shrieking. He sat on the edge of the bed, took Mironoff's hand, and pulled a black watch out of his pocket. Looking at it, he asked in a high treble voice as though he were an old friend:

"Well, how do we feel?"

"No weevil at all," answered Mironoff crossly.

"Where are your pains?"

"What are your pains?" asked Mironoff in a tone of bitter sarcasm.

"How did you sleep?"

"I slept lying down." Mironoff burst into loud laughter, delighted with his own quick wit. He felt full of an unwonted energy, and very cheerful. He really liked this stocky little fellow, though he did reek of shoe-blacking. He resembled one of those funny toys that stand up when you knock them down. His face was puffy and looked as though it were made of rubber. His complexion was of a bluish tint, and his eyes a queer yellow

that swam listlessly like rayless stars on a wet night. Mironoff glanced toward the window: a bluish cloud glided swiftly along the ridge of the sky. The little man rubbed his blue chin with the palm of his hand as he asked, "Do you know me? I'm the assistant physician Isakoff."

A little embarrassed, Mironoff inquired what time it was.

"Half-past twelve."

"I'm hungry."

"That is very good," said the other, putting his watch back into his pocket. The room was flooded with sunlight, and the words spoken in it seemed to float here and there like rainbow-tinted bubbles. Mironoff pondered.

"If it were only always like that!"

"What?"

"Everything."

Deep in his heart he felt a happiness that lifted him above the earth. Bare-footed and with nothing on but his underclothes, he went into the kitchen to wash, but stopped at the door. He had caught sight of a shock of golden hair encircled by a leather band. Kallistrat was bent over the table, writing something with a pencil in a dirty note-book. Mironoff turned back noiselessly and sat down on his bed. All his new-found energy and happiness had vanished.

"What's the matter?" asked the doctor in his sing-song voice, and pressed his fingers to the patient's temples. Mironoff turned aside, shook his head and asked in a whisper:

"Did he bring you here?"

"Yes. Why do you ask?"

"Where did he spend the night?"

"How should I know? People usually spend their nights at home."

"He's not a usual man."

"How so?"

Mironoff made no answer to this, nor to any of the other questions addressed to him by the assistant. He rocked to and fro, his hands clutching the edge of the bed, biting his lips and wondering desperately how he was to rid himself of the carpenter. The assistant passed into the kitchen, his shoes screeching as he walked, while Mironoff went to the window and began throwing the flower-pots out into the street. He had put one foot on the sill when he felt himself seized in an iron grip and held back by the shoulders. He knew who it was who held him, and submitted to the superior power, allowing himself to be led back to bed again, where he lay down without saying a word. Closing his eyes, he listened to the whispers of the other two, making out nothing but incomprehensible syllables that formed themselves into meaningless groups of sounds. The words were like gray shadows flitting about. He opened his eyes as the carpenter inquired:

"What's wrong with you, my boy? Sick?"

The green light in Kallistrat's eyes reminded Mironoff of something he had already experienced. It seemed years ago, when he was a boy.

"What are you staring at? Don't you know me?"

"He's trying to make me remember," thought Mironoff, and said aloud: "It seems I have seen you before . . . Yes, that's it . . ."

"A good dose of bromide is what he needs."

"They mean me," thought Mironoff. "They'll give me poison." He moved backward, sat up, crossed his legs, and leaning his head against the wall, stared into the corner, at the ceiling, and then with a cold shudder, riveted his eyes on a green spot on the wall. There he saw the picture called *The Death of a Sinner*. There was the green devil at one corner laughing. It all became crystal clear to him. That was the reason why the carpenter had ruined the sky-blue house; why he could swim through the air; why he liked noise and excitement. "Who is your master?" he asked himself triumphantly, because now he knew: Konstantin Mironoff does not believe in the ordinary God, the God of ordinary people . . . It was all clear now. But what was to be his next step? He felt hot and frightened. Without uncrossing his legs, he rolled over on one side.

"I want to sleep," he said.

"But what about eating?" asked the assistant.

"I'm going to sleep."

"Well, that's good for you, too."

The two went out, Kallistrat saying to the other: "Just like a baby."

He might deceive the doctor, but not Mironoff, who had at last made up his mind what to do. The first thing was to hide from the carpenter. After a few moments' reflection he got up, wrapped himself in a sheet, and looked at himself in the mirror. He was sorry he had no beard: that would have made him look more like Lazarus risen from the grave. He was terrified by what he saw in the mirror: something out of the depths was luring him on. He supported himself against the door, and muttered in a hoarse whisper: "I'm coming, I'm coming at once, My Lord," He peered through the door and saw that the kitchen was empty. A samovar stood on the table, shining in the clear sunlight. Little clouds of steam hovered over it. Mironoff went to it and turned the tap. He felt impelled to do that, but when he saw the clear jet of steaming water trickle down and melt away on the surface of the tray, he was afraid. He stopped and listened. Somewhere out in the yard he heard Pavlovna and the carpenter.

"No! Himself?"

"Himself" was of course God, the ordinary God. Why, Kallistrat had already divined what Mironoff was going to tell him.

"Know Him?" he heard the carpenter say, raising a threatening fist at the old woman. Scarcely touching the floor with his feet, Mironoff went into the antechamber and climbed the stairs to the garret, inhaling

deep breaths of hot and dusty air. Closing the door behind him he knelt down facing the semicircular window. He began to sing a Psalm to his God, crossing himself and bowing his head to the floor. He had forgotten the words, and stopped a moment to reflect. Rising and standing near the window he turned his face to the sky and said in a loud voice: "Forgive me, I was wrong . . . I believe. I pray——"

But the carpenter was nearer to him than God. He had heard the confession out in the garden, and cried out anxiously:

"Look out there at the garret window!"

Mironoff rushed back to the door, dragging to it everything he could find to use for a barricade; broken furniture, boxes, baskets, and boards. The moment he had made everything secure, he made the sign of the cross and murmured "God protect me!" Meanwhile the carpenter had run up-stairs and was now thumping on the garret door:

"Konstantin! See here! Listen to me, I tell you——"

"Afraid, are you?" shouted Mironoff and laughed, feeling himself secure, especially after he had made the sign of the cross.

"Konstantin, I'm your friend, am I not?"

"No!" shouted Mironoff, and seizing a loose brick from the chimney, flung it against the door. It struck one of the boxes. The resounding noise strengthened his resolution to defend himself against the carpenter. A moment after, the barricade began to dance as though animated by the carpenter's sorcery: chairs and boxes tumbled to the floor in a heap. Mironoff watched the frantic but vain efforts of his adversary. Finally, however, straining under the violent attacks from outside, the door swung on its hinges and fell in. The figure of Kallistrat, framed in the gaping doorway, frightened Mironoff for a moment, but he had sufficient presence of mind to seize another brick and throw it straight at the carpenter's beard. He saw Kallistrat throw his arms wildly in the air, heard him groan and fall backwards down the stairs with a mighty crash. Mironoff, overcome with ecstatic joy, leapt in the air and ran to the doorway, where he stood throwing everything he could lay hands on at the prostrate form of his vanquished enemy. He roared with laughter to hear the indistinct groans of the unfortunate carpenter, who was calling for the fire-brigade.

"Help! Water! He'll kill himself!"

Mironoff stopped for an instant and listened. Outside in the street he could hear the cries of boys and then the familiar base tones of Rosanoff saying, "It was you who made him go out of his mind."

"Yes," cried Mironoff, "it's he. Do you know who he is? Can you see? Ha!" He was suffocated with joy. At last he realised that everybody knew the carpenter for what he was. He was about to go downstairs when he was stopped short by the carpenter's voice:

"Don't hurt me, Artamon, do you hear?"

Did that mean that Artamon, too, had discovered the truth about him

and had finally thrown off the magic spell? But the teamster himself had meantime come up to the garret doorway, kicking aside the wreckage. Opening his ugly mouth and spreading his great fingers as usual, he advanced toward Mironoff with a growl:

"What's all the fuss about now?"

Of course, Kallistrat had instructed Artamon to deal with him as though he had been a horse.

"I'm not a horse," said Mironoff, as Artamon extended his arms toward him.

"Come now," said the teamster, coming ever closer. "Don't be afraid." Kallistrat now came in and together the two forced Mironoff into a corner. Making a desperate attempt to evade the carpenter, Mironoff threw himself on all fours and crawled toward Artamon, but the teamster seized him by the shoulders and picked him up, head downwards, grunting, "Caught him!"

Mironoff struck blindly and knocked his head against the dark wall. His body seemed to melt away in the darkness. Later the darkness slowly dissolved, and he realised that he was lying on something soft that swayed and floated. His arms and legs were broken, his head felt abnormally large and had become so heavy that he had not the strength to lift it. The words of the little song rang in his ears,

Seven sons, seven sons,
What shall we do with seven sons?

A light blue sky dazzled overhead, indistinct white figures floated in the soft light, urging him on: now two of them bent over him with quick nimble movements, making his broken body a little more comfortable. They rocked him and made him feel that he had no body at all, then carried him up, up into the blue canopy overhead. Mironoff realised that God had heard his prayer and thought that His angels were taking him from the earth. Yes, here was God Himself, tall, dressed in white, with golden spectacles, answering Mironoff's cry of gladness with a gentle nod. He floated past, caressing him with a cool breeze and the delicious odor of flowers. It was wonderful to see that this was not the ordinary God of old, the God of simple folk, but the true and wise Maker of the infinite harmonious stillness of things. The world was now quiet, and when the Maker of the Blue Stillness again appeared to him, he realised that with this God he could speak in the language of Paris:

"*Je vous remercie, Mon Dieu. Je vous remercie que vous* —" He could go no further in French and lapsed into Russian: "Forgive me, I really don't know the language yet. It's very difficult. I found it very hard. The other God, the ordinary God, had not the power to help me out. I don't like Him. I have always wanted to come to you, even from the first. Long ago."

"How long?" asked the Maker of the Blue Stillness, looking into his eyes through his gold-rimmed spectacles, and speaking with the tenderness of a loving father.

"*Toujours* — always. I'm not too late, am I?"

"Oh no," smiled the Maker. "Only, people are as a rule not in any hurry to come to me." It seemed to Mironoff that there was a touch of reproachful sadness in His voice.

"*Oui*," he agreed, feeling that all his beautiful blue thoughts and words were slipping from him. He was uneasy with the fear that he would not have time to say all he wanted to say.

"No, they are in no hurry. They marry 'fine girls' like Serafina, damn them — *Pardon!* I beg your pardon! They live like dogs, you know, without shame. Then they have children, eat soaked apples so greedily! Well, as far as I'm concerned, I ask for nothing. The ordinary God pays no attention to those people, it's the carpenter who orders their poor lives. You know it was I who first discovered who the carpenter was. He is the demon of trifles, of noise and excitement, the Devil of Hustle. It was he who invented drunkenness, soaked apples, marriage, fish pies, gambling, everything that I dislike and don't want."

At the thought of the carpenter, Mironoff screamed with anger, but the Maker took him gently with one hand and turning over the leaves of his Book of Laws with the other, asked him, "Are you often subject to headaches?"

"Head? *La tête?*" He remembered the French word, and putting his hands up, felt his head. It was smooth and cold as a piece of marble.

"It is said to hang in the air." He recalled this phrase, as he pressed his head, then he began singing plaintively

Siskin, Siskin,
Where have you been?

"Did you add much to it?" I inquired of Dr. Alexander Alexin after he had told me the story of this man's case.

"You, of course, would have added more," he answered with a smile. "The story was told me by a colleague who was treating Mironoff's arm. Mironoff threw himself out of the window when he caught sight of the carpenter who had come to visit at the hospital.

A few days ago I met Mironoff again. He had come to consult me — slight touch of bronchitis. We remembered each other. He's not a man you'd easily forget. I think he's something of a knave, though he pulls a long face at the world. He owns the Book-bindery on the Morskaia. . . .

Konstantin Dmitrievitch Mironoff peered at the bottom of his glass where he had discovered a still undissolved piece of sugar. Carefully scrap-

ing it out with his spoon, he put it into his mouth, now surrounded with bristly whiskers, and sighed deeply.

"Yes," he said, "that's a fine case of unbalanced mentality! Well, shall we get down to business now?"

And picking up a pencil with his long skinny fingers, he began figuring on a scrap of paper.

"Considering that you have been recommended by the highly esteemed Dr. Alexin, and that you are in the same line of business as I am, well — I shall charge you — for the leather and cloth — Is that too much?"

"Not at all. It's no more than it's worth."

He explained to me in detail all about prices, the whims of his women customers, the taxes and various other things, to convince me of his disinterested and reasonable services. As he spoke, he stroked his bumpy skull with the palm of his hand. His long ears stuck out like the handles of a travelling-bag. His large nose nestled in the wiry hairs of his well-trimmed moustache. His cheek-bones moved strangely, and he spoke in a dull and colorless monotone. It seemed that he was chewing or sucking his words. The room was small and stuffy, and filled with the scent of leather, glue, and machine oil.

"Tell me," I asked, "how were you conscious that reason was returning to your brain?"

"You see," he answered almost reluctantly, "I'd almost forgotten all about it until the Doctor reminded me. It's really not very interesting and I'm somewhat ashamed. Other people go crazy in a decent or even a clever way: they imagine they are kings, for instance, or animals, something either very grand or at least funny. In my case it was downright foolishness, stupidity. There was an engineer at the asylum who thought he was a chess-knight. He was always jumping either to the right or the left of the door, and could never go through it. When the Doctor told me I thought he was God, I was really very grieved. A decent fellow, that Doctor."

"How about the carpenter?"

"Oh, he died. Not long ago — four years. I've lived here nine. I have to, because of my weak chest. The carpenter drank himself to death. While I was ill (for eleven months, that was) I had to bring him into court. He took it upon himself to look after my property, and made such a mess of it! He, too, was insane, like the poets and writers over there . . ."

He pointed in the direction of a book he was then repairing. Then coughing and passing his hand over his throat, "Yes, yes," he continued, "I read books when I have time. Usually before going to sleep. No, books have no effect on me. Writers have nothing interesting to write about nowadays. All about love — as though people needed that! Yes, a knowledge of French is very useful: I bind many French books. — Well, then, we're agreed: thirteen volumes in full leather. The Bible will cost you more,

though, it's a fat volume. — Tell me, why are you so interested in the carpenter?" he asked, slightly offended, and continued in his drowsy manner:

"He was an ordinary man, who deserved his fate. He had made up his mind that I should marry his niece, and then he made a mess of everything. He looked on my property as his own, but I can truly say I had him in a corner, as I did my father-in-law Rosanoff, whom he owed a great deal to, for timber."

As I listened to the reluctant tale, I was seized with a mad desire to drive Mironoff crazy again. But I listened as he brought the story to a close:

"Lisaveta Ivanovna died after giving birth to a baby girl. The child was still-born. I married again. Yes, thank you, I'm happy and peaceful. Her mother is a Greek, but she turned out quite respectable. To tell you the truth, it wasn't so peaceful with the first: she was subject to whims and tears. A difficult character. And pious, you have no idea! It was ridiculous, if you don't mind my saying so. Crosses and ikons all about her, and talking of nothing but miracles. She feared death."

He coughed, wrinkled up his forehead and added in a didactic tone: "As though there was anything to be afraid of! One should remember the Cossack proverb, 'While I am here, there is no death, and when death comes, I will not be here.' Very true. And you might add, 'You will not die before your death.'"

He smiled a grim smile, showing a neat row of false teeth.

"On my Name Day, Lisaveta Ivanovna gave me a ring representing a skull. Can you imagine? I loathe human bones. She was quite fantastic, and a bit mad. After she died I had to bring suit against her father on account of the dowry. He was a very highly respected citizen, but too greedy. . . . Shall we finish our business? — *Don Quixote* in two volumes. Leather? Don't try to make me reduce any price.

"Remember, you might be able to make some use of my story."

"Are you reckoning that in the bill?"

"Why not?" he asked, not without surprise. "Everything should be reckoned in this world. We must be careful: he who is careful is favored by the Goddess of Fortune . . ."

"No," I reflected, "nothing can possibly drive him mad again." Aloud I asked him, "Have you still your globe?"

Stroking the back of his head and glancing at the scrap of paper before him, he grudgingly answered:

"The carpenter started to mend it once, but all he did was to smash the musical cylinder. . . ."

Poland

INTRODUCTION

IT IS possible to trace the first impulses toward literature in Poland to a time somewhat before the Fourteenth Century, for the first Polish texts date from that epoch. Yet it can scarcely be said to have assumed any considerable importance until the Sixteenth. It declined to a certain extent during the Seventeenth Century, and became extinct in the Eighteenth.

The period of its glory was during the first half of the Nineteenth Century. Following upon the work of the great romantic poets Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and Krasinski, came the prose writers Kraszewski, Mme. Orzeszko, Glowacki ("Prus"), and Sienkiewicz; and a little later, Sieroszewski, Szymanski, Zeromski, and Reymont. Though the modern Poles have excelled in the novel form, most of the modern Polish fiction writers have tried a hand at the writing of short stories and short novels. This is especially true of Sienkiewicz and Reymont.

WLADYSLAW STANISLAW REYMONT

(1868–1925)

BORN in a small village of Russian Poland, Reymont spent a large part of his youth as a travelling actor and a subordinate railway official. His earlier novels depicted the seamy side of the existence of actors and petty railroad employees. But his most characteristic work is to be found in his tales of Polish peasant life, of which the epic novel, *The Peasants*, is the greatest and best-known.

Tomek Baran (1897) is a typical work, revealing as it does the writer's understanding of the people he knows best.

This story appears here for the first time in an English translation. It was especially translated by Professor George R. Noyes, and is used by permission of the author's wife, his representative, and the translator.

TOMEK BARAN

WHEN Tomek opened the tavern door steam gushed forth from the room as from a cow shed, and a flood of air so close and stifling as to be fairly sticky enveloped him. But without heeding this Tomek went in and pushed his way through a throng packed tight as grain on a threshing floor, up to the wooden grating behind which stood the bar.

"Give me a dram of good strong stuff."

"Want it in tin?"

"No, glass."

The mistress of the tavern measured it out to him. He paid his money, took his bottle and his glass and went to the other side of the room, to the second table. He sat down close to the wall, poured his liquor into the glass and drank it down. He squirted saliva through his teeth, wiped his lips with his sleeve, and became buried in thought. Some inward anguish was consuming him, for he could not sit still. He kept spitting, he beat the table with his fist; sometimes he rose as if he wished to flee, then again he settled back on the bench with a quiet groan and rubbed his eyes with his hand, for tears kept trickling down his dry, bluish, furrowed cheeks, scorching him like fire. He was almost unconscious what was going on around him. Some grievous suffering lay on his heart like a stone, for he was evidently beside himself. His shoulders drooped with constantly increasing despair; he sighed more and more frequently and kept scratching his head.

But the tavern fairly shook with the boisterous, rhythmic dance. A score of pairs, crowded close together in the scanty space allowed them, were circling about with stamping of feet and shouting.

"Hop! hop! hop!" rang forth the loud cry.

Every brow was moist, from liquor and the intoxication of the dance, yet the wild shouts of encouragement so spurred on the dancers that they stamped with ever increasing fury and circled about more and more swiftly.

The women's red skirts made gay patches amid the men's white coats, like poppies in a field of ripening rye. Through the little frosted windows of the tavern the dying day poured in streaks of ruddy light, and the crude lamp that glimmered above the hearth continually rocked and quivered as though it were keeping time with the dance.

A dull clamor arose, a sort of confused and indistinct rumble, from which crisp cries of "Hop! hop! hop!" now and then flew forth like flashes of lightning — and again for a moment all was drowned in an overpowering hubbub. For at the tables, in the corners, close to the bar, wherever there was room, peasants were standing about and chatting: of last season's potatoes, of the parish priest, of their children, of their cattle, of everything that was "on their chests," whereof it is always easier to speak in company, since there one can find a sympathetic ear. For just as an ox by itself will not drink from a spring, but in company with others will drink and snort for joy, even so it is not good that man should live alone, or enjoy himself in the tavern alone, or ride alone to the forest, but, as God has ordained, always with other men, with his comrades.

All were talking at once, were drinking one another's health, and embracing with hearty affection, and the mellow feeling given by liquor made all eyes sparkle and evoked ever louder shouts of "Hop! hop! hop!"

The planks of the floor creaked more and more heavily under the heavy stamping of heels, and the bass viols, which were set high up, on cabbage barrels, sang louder and louder: "Bom, tsik, tsik! Bom, tsik, tsik!"

And the little fiddles of linden wood replied to them: "Tuli, tuli, tuli, tuli, tulitee, tulitee!"

Joy was riotous and unconfined. Faces were close to faces, breasts to breasts, shoulders to shoulders, and all was so thoroughly penetrated with the rhythm of the lively music that the dance proceeded in wild, dashing, peasant fashion, till knots flew forth from the floor, the window panes moaned pitifully, and the big-bellied glasses on the bar fairly leapt with delight.

Now and then the tavern keeper would seize a tambourine, shake it powerfully, as a peasant shakes a Jew by his topknot, and smite it with his fist in time to the music of the fiddles.

"Dizh, dizh, dizh!" There was a confused, overpowering, deafening roar, and the trampling became more riotous and the shouts hoarser than ever; the lamp swayed and scattered flakes of soot on the fluttering coats.

The steam from the snow melting on the boots and near the door, the smoke of cigarettes, and the darkness that reigned in the huge room veiled the dancers, so that there was a mere twinkling of red faces, of indistinctly outlined forms, and of bright colors in that furiously seething whirlpool of human beings.

"Who will help me, help me, help me, ha, ha, ha; ee, ee, ee!" tittered the fiddles gaily.

"I will, I will, ho, ho, ho!" answered the bass viols with a sort of convulsive effort; and all together they began to laugh and to jabber and to permeate everyone with hilarious laughter, till the tavern seemed to shake with a flood of drunken jollity.

One old woman — she went mad;
Another mad as well:
The devil stole away a third
And carried her off to hell.

When some one sang this stanza it was the signal for others to continue the song with ever-increasing gayety.

Tomek alone kept his seat, buried in thought. He poured out another glass, but an excited dancer tipped it over for him. So Tomek spitefully kicked the fellow's partner, and, since it was cold near the window and since he had grown tired of sitting alone, he got up and went behind the bar into the smaller room.

This too was full of peasants, who were clutching bottles in their hands, kissing, gossiping, and drinking one another's healths; the women modestly shielded themselves with their aprons and delightedly smacked their lips over their spirits. Good, honest, Catholic treating was in full swing: if a man owed another a drink of arrack, he set it up; if it was spirits with anise, he set it up; if it went as high as pure spirits, he set it up; or if it was only beer, he set it up.

He set it up with a good heart and a good will.

Everybody was already drunk, but what of that? A goat can die but once, liquor is not hell, and once in an age a poor man needs some comfort for his sinful soul and at least a drop to drown his sorrow.

"'Oh, you cur!' stuttered a drunken peasant to the fireplace; 'is that your kind? Just wait!' And I hit him so, and he hit me so, and I takes him by the collar, and he gives me one in the snout! 'Is that your kind, you cur? A Christian you are!' And he gives me one in the mug! . . . 'Bartek had beaten a lot of men and he'll beat you too; he'll beat you, you cur; he'll beat you!' And I hit him so, and he hit me so, and I says to him politely: 'Brother!' And he gives me one in the snout, and I says to him; 'Friend!' And he gives me one in the snout, and then I says to him: 'Is that your kind? A Christian you are!'"

He muttered more and more indistinctly and beat the fireplace with his

fist till the room echoed, and he continued his babble more and more sleepily.

"We've come for water to the lake;
So here's a kiss, and many!
I'll give you all that you will take,
Because I love my honey!"

So sang Karlina, who had buried her husband at last harvest time and who was now living in lonely widowhood on a dozen acres of wheat land, with a horse, some cows, and some decent rags left her by the deceased. She addressed a young lad who was standing by the wall. Once more she sang to him:

Wojtek, Wojtek my darling,
Sit no more by the stove!
Run, run quick to the widow,
For she'll give you her bread and her love.

"To your health, Wojtek, my darling boy! What a silly fellow you are to be afraid of your old folks! I told you that I'd settle the farm on you, and I will. Isn't it mine to give?

"Good things shall you have, for I love you:
Cheese shall you eat for your supper
And a tender chick for your breakfast.

"Pay your respects to the holy father and give him something to publish the bans. We'll kill a hog, bake some cakes, buy some spirits, and have a marriage that'll make folks stare!"

"Bah, silly old witch! She has no teeth and she wants to chew crusts!" somebody spoke up from near by.

"Hey hey, turn your lamps somewhere else than on people's teeth. Look at the fellow, the damned scoundrel!" exclaimed Karlina wrathfully.

"Go slow, old woman; I've something to tell you."

"Tell it to the dogs. The tramp has put on an overcoat and thinks he's lord of the manor.— But even if you begged through the village and barked like a dog, I wouldn't pour any whiskey down your throat."

She turned back to Wojtek, drew him into the corner, and continued her persuasions. But near by at a little table two peasants were seated, drinking from a big-bellied bottle. One was silently scratching his head, but the other was waving his arms and chattering:

"Just notice what Czerwiński is telling you! Troubles settled down on me like women on a Jew's horse, and I didn't care! My wife and baby were wasting away — never mind! My horses were stolen — never mind, I just waited! My Jendrek caught the small pox — what to hell! Just as soon as I drank some brandy with grease in it, just as soon as I gave his Reverence money for a holy mass — it all cleared up in a moment! Just

do the same thing, Grzela, and you will see that it will help you. Czerwiński is telling you, and you can trust Czerwiński."

"I have as many children as sparrows on a plowed field, my wife is ill once more, I have to pay my taxes, my potatoes have frozen, troubles fairly shout in my face — and on top of it all my pigsty has broken down. Lord! Lord! Do drink my health! I don't think I can manage it; I keep thinking things over this way and that way and I can't find a way out."

"You're silly, Grzela; here's to you! You'd better stand a blow on the snout from the foreman and not mind it, for you can't do anything about it; you may feel his fist now and then, but you'll have work on the railroad and money in your pocket. Just take notice, Czerwiński is telling you this! And you can trust Czerwiński! His Reverence said that there were only two good heads in the parish: one was his and the other was Czerwiński's! God grant him good health; he's a wise gentleman and a learned. Here's to you, Grzela!"

"Pani Jackowa, Pani Jackowa: a bottle of essence, a quart of spirits, two pans of buns and a pound of sausage!" Such was the call from a table near the window, at which four persons were seated, two dressed in city style and two in peasant garb.

"Pani Jackowa, Pani Jackowa, some vinegar for the sausage, and a plate for the Forester! Listen, Mr. Forester, I'll tell you how it was —"

"Hush up, old man, I'll tell it more exactly, for you don't remember," his wife interrupted him. "I was walking along the road through the woods, walking just like this."

"Shut your mouth — she'll just wag her tongue and say nothing. I'll tell the story. To your health, sir!"

"Thank you!"

"Sweet and strong, Mr. Forester; let's have another!"

"To your health, Andrzej!"

"Pani Jackowa, another of the same sort!"

"Thank you, Andrzej, but I can't drink any more."

"My dearest sir, one more glass, just a drop, just a spoonful! I'll tell you right away how it happened. My wife says: 'I was walking along the road through the woods,' she says, 'across the Forester's section. And there,' she says, 'something was lying that looked like a rabbit but wasn't a rabbit. It hadn't a tail,' she says, 'so it wasn't a calf; and it wasn't a pig, for it didn't squeal.' The woman stopped short and was so stiff with fright that all she could do was to say, 'Lord help us!' But the beast just lay still and opened its mouth, and it had claws, she says, as long as your finger. And because women are always rash and passionate, whether they do evil or do good, so, she says, she just whips off her shoe and whacks the brute between the eyes, and then takes and runs home bawling. She flew into the cottage and says, 'Old man!' 'Well?' says I.

'I've killed some beast on the wood road,' she says. I didn't answer, for I thought she was just daft with walking, and was talking rubbish as women usually do. But she kept to her story: 'I've killed a beast or something or other on the wood road,' she says. I banged her over the shoulders to make her stop chattering, but she started in again. 'I've killed a beast on the wood road, I swear I have!' she says. 'I can't manage the woman,' I thought to myself; 'maybe she's really killed a man or something.' So I hitched up the grey nag and went to see — and that was when you found me in the woods, Mr. Forester."

"Andrzej, don't lie like a gipsy! I caught you when you were just loading the roe on your wagon."

"Just another drop of whiskey, Mr. Forester, for the journey! I have told you the truth as I would at confession, to his Reverence. Mr. Forester, you are more to me than a father or a brother, for you are my beloved friend and benefactor. I know that if you say the word, Mr. Forester, I shall lose my case in court, for such is the way of the world, that a gentleman is always on top, and we poor peasants just have to suffer and toil and weep! I know, Mr. Forester, that you are an honest man, and kind and just, and will not do me any wrong, and that I love you like my own brother.— My wife will bring round a pig tomorrow, as a friendly offering, and so we'll fix it up. Why should we give good money to the courts! Pani Jackowa, one more of the same sort!"

"I'll bring some ducks too, and a comb of honey, for I know that you are a noble and high-bred lady, madam, and that you were educated in schools, just as was your husband the Forester; and that you are not poor peasant folk, like us, for instance," added the woman slyly, bending over the knees of the Forester's wife. The latter threw her arms around her neck and the two women began to kiss each other tenderly.

"My heart is so soft, Andrzej, that I will not only forget about the roe, but if you ever need a young pine, or even a young oak, I shall not have the heart to refuse you."

"Your health, sir, you have a merciful and a Christian soul."

They began to drink to each other one health after another, to exchange hearty kisses, and to converse in gentle whispers, so that once more the talk of the peasants at the neighboring table could be heard.

"Damn it all! The man went to ruin. Did you live near him?"

"Next door. I saw the whole thing; true it is that sorrow destroys a man like an illness."

"Czerwiński can tell you. He might have lived to this day — I will say nothing but good of him this evening — he might have lived."

"Hard luck! He could not go out of doors at all, and he kept vomiting; he groaned and groaned and finally he died, poor fellow."

"Did they have a doctor?"

"Those doctors! If a man is fated to die, no matter if you give him a

fifty-acre field and fill him with good things up to the chin — he won't recover."

"True enough! Here's to you, Grzela!"

"To your health! And who was to blame for it all! To tell the honest truth, nobody but a pig and a woman. He had a sow as fat as butter, and he took it off to market, for he needed some cash. He went off with the pig; the snow was up to his middle and he got exhausted and worn out, as a man always does when he has to do trading. Then he ate some sausages and they lay dead on his stomach and he took sick. If he had only drunk some vodka, he would have been all right, honest to God, but he didn't drink even a dram."

"The poor fellow was afraid of hell in his own house."

"Ho! ho! His wife was no good, but clever with her fists. Sometimes she used to beat him, she did!"

"Your health, friend!"

"Same to you! Czerwiński can tell you: if he had only beaten the slut so that she couldn't see out of her eyes, then he'd have had a wife worth while!"

"You're right, bailiff; you're right. He was gentle of hand; had no good peasant common sense — and now he's under the sod. May the Lord give him eternal rest!"

"For ever and ever, amen! Here's to you, Grzela."

"A fine husband you are! Your wife is at the point of death, and here you are drinking, you pagans!" shouted a peasant woman, pushing her way up to them.

"What do I care! I have more brats than any other trash, and still they keep coming."

"Grzela, do not offend the Lord God, or He will take them from you."

"Have a drink, woman, and we'll start off directly."

"But the Lord Jesus," the woman began, "has not comforted my old age with a child. Yet I prayed to him, and went on a pilgrimage to Czenstochowa and got treated by lots of doctors — but it was no use. I'm left alone in the world, like this sinful finger — alone."

"You'll have a child, woman, when you're a hundred."

"You needn't talk, Czerwiński: wasn't I young once?"

"The Lord God entered into heaven, the devil into a woman, and yeast into beer — only nobody knows when! Take note of that, woman, for it's Czerwiński that tells you so!"

In the corner a young lad, the son of the organist of the place, was sitting on a chest, and in front of him stood a very old woman, who was whispering in a suppressed, tuneful voice.

"Seventy-six years have I been living, young gentleman, and I've seen black and white and all sorts of colors. I've been in service with gentry who drove only behind stallions, who ate off silver plates and talked for-

eign languages — and where are they now! Where? I know how to read books, and I was a householder, the foremost in the whole village, and I had children, and goods of all sorts — oh! — and they are all gone, wasted away, like the summer's sun that the Lord Jesus sends to comfort us sinners. I know it all, young gentleman, I know that whether it be a lord's life or a peasant's life, it is always nothing else than utter misery. I am a simple woman, I am seventy-six years old — and I have taken good note of everything. Young gentleman, has the world existed for six thousand years?"

"Almost six thousand years."

"You see, young gentleman, that I know everything, and so this is what I think: if the world has existed so many thousand years, and has been happy, then why have I had to suffer for so many years? How was I to blame?"

"It is certainly hard. God has given us life — and so —"

"Young gentleman," the old woman interrupted him abruptly, "I am a simple woman, and you are a learned young man, for you can play the organ and sing in Latin with the holy father, and you know when to strike the high notes and when the low ones — but I can tell you; perhaps I have sinful thoughts, but I can tell you that it's most surely the devil that sends poor souls into the world to suffer and to pine away in utter misery for so many years as I. It is not the Lord God, though it is written in books, and though priests say so; no, it isn't! What would the dear Lord Jesus gain from making so many people suffer and pine away and perish? The Lord God is a good Lord and a just Lord. Life here is not sweet, not soft as velvet; it just tears us like a curry-comb, till a man pours out his heart's blood."

"What makes you talk like that, Jagustynka? It's absolutely sinful!"

"To do wrong to another man is the only sin, and I would not strike a dog with a stick, for he too is alive and suffers thereby. Young gentleman, I am a simple woman, but I have a heart scorched by fire like that coal on the hearth, tempered by the bitterness that I have drunk all my life both for myself and for others — and I know that because he hated the Lord God the devil gave life, in order that generations of men might wither away in the world for ages and ages. But the most belovèd Jesus has had compassion on us; He has overcome the evil one, and He is gradually gathering men to His own glory — and one day He will gather in all men. I am but waiting till the Skeleton touches me and says, 'Come!' I am waiting and am uttering a prayer that I may close my eyes speedily and have no longer any anguish and suffering — and that I may find true rest, rest, young gentleman."

She straightened herself up above the dozing organist, and drooped her withered countenance, furrowed by cares and old age. In her dim, tear-scorched eyes tears glistened; she wiped them quickly with her apron,

sighed softly, and turned to Tomek, who was sitting by himself on a box, with the bottle in his hand.

"Tomek, you have an evil look in your eyes," she whispered, touching him on the shoulder.

"What can it be but trouble? Don't you know that, woman?"

"I've heard something, but people say such different things that one can't tell what's truth and what's froth."

"They've discharged me," whispered the peasant gloomily.

"What for?"

And in her voice there was a note of boundless sympathy.

"What for? Because a man must always be giving presents to the foreman: geese in the autumn, butter at Shrovetide, a pig and eggs at Easter, and chickens at Whitsuntide — and I did not bring them in like the others, for where could I get them? I had nothing to give the children to eat; my wife was perishing of misery; the cow had died for lack of fodder; you know what the potatoes were like last fall — I dug fewer than I planted. I almost split myself with work, but I accomplished nothing for my wife, and nothing else either; I toiled on my job and at home, day and night, and could not get out of trouble. The foreman kept pecking at me, but what could I give him? I could have given it to him under the rib, for the children and I had nothing to put in our mouths. He nagged me and pestered me more and more. He wrote a report of me to the superintendent, that I was insolent, that I was lazy, that I slept on my job, that I did not patrol the track — finally he said that I had stolen some iron from the storehouse, that — "

"Tomek, did you take it? Tell me the truth; it makes no difference to you now."

"I did not take it, woman; I did not. May I perish at holy confession like a mad dog if I am lying! I never stole. Sometimes my comrades used to steal, but my father did not steal, and his son will never be a thief. I'm poor, but I'm not a thief all the same."

"And was that the only reason that they turned you out? They said that they found the iron in your house."

"Just so. That's the honest truth; they found it, only I did not put it there. Michał Rafałow promised to pay the foreman fifty rubles if he would give him a job on the railroad, and because there was no vacancy he hid the iron at my place and denounced me. They searched my premises, found the goods, and discharged me. I'm ruined, for though I knew who did it, I had no witnesses. Six people are left without bread. I can't find a job, there's nothing to eat, I can't live; and if the merciful Jesus does not help me, I can't hold out, I can't hold out."

He groaned helplessly and the tears flowed in a stream down his tanned countenance.

"O fate of men!" whispered the old woman bitterly. "Grief fairly fur-

rows the cheeks; the soul fairly shrivels up with suffering like a bird in the cold, and no help comes from anywhere. Only foolish folk say that there is goodness in the world; yes, there is goodness, but it amounts to nothing but words."

"Do not give up, Tomek!" she said to him consolingly. "The Lord Jesus has overcome the evil one, and why should not an honest man escape from misfortune with the aid of the Most Holy Virgin?" Then she went to the counter, bought two pans of buns and a quart of millet grits, and came back to him.

"Tomek, take the grits and the buns to your children. I am a poor lonely old woman and would give you more, but I have nothing myself. Whoever has sheep buys what he wishes, but I am a mere laborer on others' land. But, Tomek, I can give you some advice."

"Give it to me, woman, and the Lord Jesus and the Holy Virgin will reward you for helping a poor man."

"Go to the foreman tomorrow and bow down to his feet; perhaps he will take pity on you, for he has children himself. If you alone were to die of hunger, he wouldn't care — but that those poor things should perish, who can still do nothing for themselves, even he will not endure; it is a sin that little children should whine with hunger."

"No, woman, I won't go," whispered Tomek with gloomy obstinacy. "Never mind if I do perish! If I'm to die of hunger, I'll die, but I will never ask him for help. I lay at the feet of that son of hell and whined for work like a dog, and like a dog I whined for pity on my children — but he kicked me and told them to turn me out of doors! No, I won't go, for I am afraid of doing something sinful; I am afraid. For when I see him, I feel a longing to seize him by the throat and strangle him like a wild beast."

He whispered in a voice stifled by hatred and clenched his fists tighter and tighter; then he clutched his breast and began once more:

"My chest fairly aches, I try so hard to control myself; but I have suffered so much that I hardly know whether I could keep my temper."

"Baran, keep down that wolf within you; keep it down, for you may easily get into trouble."

"Tomorrow I'm going to the wood and cut faggots."

"Beggars cannot be choosers."

"The damned Jew pays only twenty kopeks for a third of a cord, and you have to break your back for it two whole days."

"Tomek, go straight off to the priest and implore him. He knows the officials well and might put in a word for you, so that they would give you work on the railroad."

"Bah! The priest often calls on the foreman, and they are on friendly terms."

"You foolish man, the priest always stands out for justice and for the poor. He can give you advice and help."

"I have nothing to carry in my paws, and I don't dare call on him empty-handed."

"You foolish man, you can't make him a present of your children — and what else have you?"

"True enough, but, all the same, not to take anything to his Reverence —"

"You foolish man, I tell you: go straight off, fall at the feet of his Reverence and tell him the whole story. Just beat your breast, and weep, and speak of the children — and you will see how compassionate the priest will be."

"Very well, I'll go," he whispered, easily convinced. He got up from the box, put on his sheepskin coat and hat and pushed his way out through the small room and through the dancers.

The old woman followed him, and outside the tavern gave him a last warning:

"Tomek, don't be rude to his Reverence; ask him politely. A landless peasant is like a bird in the water: it flaps its wings and has to chirp for the other birds to come and help it, for it would drown if left to itself."

He made no reply, for the frosty air made him gasp for breath, but he pulled down his sheepskin hat farther over his eyes and walked away from the tavern along a path that had been trodden across the fields.

"We will eat, and we will drink, and merry will we be," the fiddles sang after him.

"As God grants, as God grants!" mumbled the bass viols in a lower voice, marking the time gaily. But Tomek did not hear those voices, which made their way forth through the tavern thatch and scattered in the frosty air like a rain of sounds sparkling with diamonds — he only went straight on.

On the snow-covered fields the moonlight made everything as clear as by day.

Huge white clouds lay in the depths of the heavens, which extended over the earth in their calm, infinite majesty like silvery yellow curtains. The plains, variegated by wave-like elevations, and marked with skeletons of trees and heaps of stones, spread out in a sea of snow, of blinding, flashing whiteness. Such a deep silence reigned in the fields that Tomek could for a long time still hear the sounds issuing from the tavern, and now and then he would turn back to look at it and at the twinkling golden spots of light in the village. But then he would quicken his pace and begin to run, not heeding the frost, which nipped his cheeks and checked his breathing.

The frost-covered crosses by the wayside cast long blue shadows; he removed his hat before them, crossed himself piously and sighed deeply; from time to time he beat his benumbed hands against his shoulders and tightened his belt before he proceeded.

Occasionally a flock of partridges rose up with a low but piercing cry, circled for a moment, and disappeared in the white, silvery mist that hung over the snow; then again a hare leaped across the fields, stopped, listened, sat up, and fled away; again a formless grey cloud floated across the heavens and cast a bluish shadow on the snows; now some dry voice of the frost flew over the land and, shattered into millions of quavering notes, vibrated and gleamed and disturbed the divine calm of the winter night; now a rumbling, like a heavy sigh, came forth from the woods, a distant, hollow noise — and again there was quiet, deadness, desolation, and a great, sweet drowsiness on the earth.

Tomek paid no heed to anything, for he was planning how he would enter the priest's room, how he would fall at his feet, and how he would say, "Your Reverence"; how he would burst into tears and start to inform the beloved father of his sufferings and his misery. He became so earnest that tears of emotion already gleamed in his eyes, rolled down his cheeks, and froze on his mustache. But then he thought about his house and his children:

"I will send Marysia out to service, Józwa also; it will be better for the girls and easier for me." But his heart sank at the thought of parting with his children. "The dear little things are asleep, asleep," he reflected, feeling carefully of the buns and the grits that he carried in his bosom. "The Lord Jesus will tide us over till spring; then it will be easier to get work, and the children will earn something or other," he thought. "Sometimes Jesus scourges, scourges," he whispered, rubbing his face with snow. "The Lord Jesus is hard, is hard." He stopped and listened. From the manor stables, the grey walls of which loomed up in the distance, came the barking and yelping of dogs. He began to walk more slowly and to cast about him sharper and more anxious glances, for the snarling and whining were becoming ever nearer and more threatening. Soon he perceived a dozen dogs furiously tearing something to pieces.

At the farm the sheep had been dying of the rot by the hundreds. So the servants, after flaying their skins, had dragged them out of doors and buried them in the snow. From all sides the dogs gathered to the banquet table and feasted for whole days and nights, gorging themselves with the carrion.

Tomek gave them a wide berth and went diagonally towards the village, which was perched on the slopes of an elevation that was crowned by a small wooden church. Around the church was a cluster of mighty linden trees, which seemed seated there like elders, talking in whispers on the quiet moonlit nights. With their gigantic, forked bodies they defended the building from tempests and from evil fortune.

The parsonage stood somewhat lower down, in the middle of a garden planted on the hillside and adjoining the village. In front of a porch that was larger than many a peasant's cottage, Tomek stopped, took off his

hat, and began to shift from one foot to the other, for his courage had entirely deserted him. He looked at the windows, which were lighted, but shaded with roller curtains, scratched his head, and spat; once more he crossed himself in order to summon up his courage, but he did not venture to go in.

The church was so near by and was so mysteriously black, and its windows glowed so strangely in the light of the moon, the lindens had such a threatening air that evening, and the crosses on the ancient graves in the cemetery were so large and so sharply defined against the background of snow, that a sort of superstitious fright gripped Tomek by the throat. He began to shiver all over, but he held his ground.

At times a gloomy cloud spread over the moon, casting a transparent shadow like that of a fan. Then again there was a mysterious crackling in the garden bushes. Occasionally the shingles of the church or the poles of the fence snapped sharply with the frost. The ravens rustled their wings and crowded together noisily along the road, on heaps of dung. A horse neighed in the stable; the bleating of sheep became audible; or the grunting of pigs feeding at the trough came forth from the priest's sties and trembled for a moment in the air; then silence settled down once more and enveloped the whole scene.

Tomek still remained standing in the same spot, gazing mechanically now at the white vapors that arose from the morasses, now at the lights that glittered here and there in the village. Then he thought of the children. "Poor little things!" he whispered; and, overcoming his timidity, he immediately entered the priest's reception room.

At the rattle of the opening doors the priest rose from his table and hastily put on his spectacles. Tomek threw his hat in the corner and cast himself down full length at the priest's feet.

"Father! Beloved benefactor!" he whispered tearfully, embracing his legs.

"What? Who's this? Who are you? What do you want?"

The priest ejaculated his questions in a tone of alarm, for he had been startled by the violence of Tomek's movements.

"I have come to ask your Reverence to take pity on me."

The priest had finally got his spectacles in position. He glanced at the kneeling man and now said in a calm tone:

"Ah! Tomasz Baran!* Arise, my child, arise!"

He sat down and wiped his spectacles with a checkered handkerchief, which he then threw over some heaps of copper coins that were arranged regularly on the table.

Tomek arose and rubbed his tear-stained eyes with his sleeve.

"What have you to say to me? Have you any business? Perhaps somebody has died in your family?"

* "Thomas Ram." "Tomek" is a diminutive, "Tommy."

"Worse, dear father, for we are all slowly dying," he replied; and in a fairly calm fashion he began to relate how he had lost his place and could get no other work, and to tell of the misery that beset him and his children. He had tears in his eyes and a quiet, boundless despair in his voice. He told his story with such sincerity that the priest was constrained to believe him, at least in part, for over his white face, which was like a mask of bleached wax and full of a sort of congealed sweetness, flitted a shadow of sorrow and sympathy.

When Tomek concluded, the priest took a pinch of snuff from a silver box and was silent for a few moments. He had a very compassionate heart, but he had so many times been led astray by crocodile tears and feigned sincerity that he was now afraid to yield. So he put on a grave expression, puffed out his lips sternly, and hid as best he might the emotion that he felt within him.

"The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal!" he said in a harsh voice. "Rascals, how many times have I told you from the pulpit: Behold, God is punishing you, for ye heed not His holy commandments?"

"I did not steal, Father; I speak as I would at holy confession: I took nothing. It was only through malice, because I gave no presents or bribes, that they conspired against me and turned me out."

"Eighth: thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. You do not say your prayers, Baran; you do not remember them, I presume!"

"I have told the truth, Father, the holy truth. The foreman was always down on me, whether there was reason or whether there was not, for I gave him nothing. On the nine bank notes that they paid me each month I could barely keep myself alive."

"A man must faithfully contribute his tithes and his dues. Must I continually remind you what the Lord Jesus and the Holy Catholic Church teach us!"

"Dearest Father! I am a Christian, I go to confession, I make offerings for the holy mass; but I have come to ask your pity, for my children are dying of hunger, and my wits are beginning to give way; I cannot sleep for constant worry and I do not know which way to turn. I have run into debt with Jews and others; I have sold my last rags, I have sold the last pig that I had; and now I am stripped bare, so that only death could find anything to take from me. Lord! Lord!" he whispered heavily, "I can hold out no longer; unless you aid me, beloved Father, I can do nothing but die."

Once more he fell at the priest's feet and almost bellowed with unrestrained weeping. He shook and sobbed so pitifully that the priest turned away slightly to wipe his tears, and very gently, with trembling lips, he began to speak:

"My child, Christ suffered for us sinners; for us thankless children he gave himself to be crucified, to be dishonored by the base multitude; and

he said never a word, though they transfixed his feet with sharp nails, though blood flowed over his eyes, though his wounds ached. He complained not, but merely said: 'Thy will be done, O Lord!' My brother, Tomek Baran —" He broke off suddenly, for tears of compassion had veiled his face. He wiped them off hastily and whispered: "You are a poor man, Baran; a forsaken orphan, a poor man!"

A heavy silence ensued, interrupted only by the broken, trembling accents of Tomek's sobs and complaints.

"The day after tomorrow I will celebrate a holy mass in your behalf, in honor of the Lord's Transfiguration; perchance the Lord God will shed the light of his countenance upon thee. His goodness is without bounds; trust only in Him; pray and have faith!" said the priest impressively.

"In my hut there is not even a crumb of bread, and the children do nothing but whimper," Tomek whispered further.

"I can give you no help in that. Come to the mass and confess yourself, for then it will be easier for you to bear the cross that it has pleased the Lord to lay upon you."

Tomek gazed at the priest with bewildered eyes, not knowing what to say. He merely glanced at the heaps of copper coins on the table and for a moment felt a sort of vague longing to seize the money and run away. But this quickly passed; he rubbed his eyes with his fist, sighed deeply, and said:

"Perhaps, Father, you would put in a word for me with the officials, or maybe at the manor. I'm willing to work for any wages whatever, for they are all in a conspiracy against me, and so they will never give me any work. But I want to work, I want to."

"You were proud and headstrong. He who sows the wind reaps the whirlwind, but a quiet calf sucks two mothers. Remember that. I will say a word in your behalf, for you are poor; I would aid you at once, but you know that I myself am always short of funds. 'And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' I have nothing. You know, that scamp Antek — may he not receive the sacrament when he dies! — drove my black horse so hard that it died. I had laid by a trifle to buy me a new nag, but Wawrzon's house burned down and Klemba again lost his cow — and, God pity me! I am again left without a penny. What can I give you, my child — are you hungry?"

"I surely am, but that is no matter; the thing is that the children have had nothing to eat for two days."

"Dear God!" he whispered and, going to a cupboard set in the wall, he took out of it a loaf of bread, still almost untouched. He was about to give him the whole loaf; but, seeing Tomek's eyes greedily fixed on the money, he checked himself in time, and merely cut off a large piece for him.

Tomek thanked him heartily and made ready to depart.

"Wait a minute, I will give you a few kopeks; I can't give you many, for they are not mine." He picked up a heap of the copper coins. "You see, this money is for the Holy Father!"

"For the Holy Father!" whispered the peasant with pious terror and crossed himself quickly.

"Even so! Good, merciful, Christian souls contribute their pennies that the Holy Father may have something on which to live. Men have taken away from him all that he had and he is left poor, he, the successor of St. Peter. He, who has power to bind and to loose all things upon earth, he too is poor; he too suffers want, my child," — here almost unconsciously he shifted half of the coins to his other hand — "but his faithful flock will not let their shepherd perish" — he laid aside a few more. "Each man brings his widow's mite with filial love; for when you give something to the poor, it is as if you gave it to God Himself." He took out a dozen of the coins that remained in his hand. "Take them, my child; I have no more. Go, and God be with you! I will put in a word for you where it will do some good. You are poor, Tomek, but the mercy and power of the Lord are almighty." He kissed him on the crown of his head and made the sign of the cross over him in the air, whispering a prayer meanwhile.

Tomek went out, deeply moved, but also strengthened in spirit.

"May God give him health; he is a kind gentleman!" he whispered; and, heedless of any road or path, he went straight home across the snow-covered fields.

"Lord! Lord! Even the Holy Father is poor! They have taken everything from him! Oh, the dogs of Germans; oh, the heretics!" he thought and clenched his fists threateningly — and he fell into deep meditation over the misfortunes of Christ's Vicar.

His spirits had risen a trifle, as though he had had some relief from his anguish. The priest's pious and sympathetic words filled with emotion his simple, honest heart; he was penetrated with the warmth of hope.

"You are a poor man, Baran; you are a forsaken orphan, Tomek!" he repeated involuntarily the priest's words, and he was so inwardly moved at the recollected melody of the words that tears of tenderness flowed down his face and he unconsciously bent forward, as though he wished to embrace some one's feet.

The cold, which was growing fiercer, brought him completely to his senses, so that he almost forgot the priest and his own misery; he only eyed with increasing eagerness the outlines of his hut, which was dimly visible near the forest, and his heart beat with anxiety for his children. The hut, which had been built long ago for a brickmaker, had now fallen into absolute ruin. The flat roof of thin planks had fallen in and rested on the ceiling. The walls were askew, and had been propped up with stakes driven into the earth; on one side earth and pine needles had been heaped against them.

The desolation round about fairly froze one's blood. Close by stood a gloomy forest of fir and pine, like a sullen, impenetrable wall; from it there came a constant roaring, and the chattering and howling of thousands of voices, so that people avoided passing near by it. On frosty nights and thawing days the wolves came out of it in packs and went to the villages in search of food. It was a wild, uninhabited spot, but Tomek rented the hut from the manor, for it was near the railroad and cost him little, and in summer the children had a place to pasture the cows. He had grown accustomed to the deserted locality and had lost his liking for the village and for throngs of men; he had become a recluse who felt at ease only with his own family.

Running up to the hut, he looked in through the frosty pane, but the room was dark. He went in quietly and lighted the lamp. All the children were asleep in the single bed, huddled in the straw and covered with rags. In the hut it was colder than outside; the fetid dampness, redolent of decay, fairly stifled one. The ragged walls, covered with a layer of hoar frost, shone as if silvered. The floor, which was of trodden clay, now frozen stiff, echoed dully under his feet. He bent over the bed and listened to the breathing of the sleepers, for he had a sudden fear that they might have frozen.

"The poor little things are asleep!" he whispered joyously.

He brought some shavings from the hall and kindled a fire in an iron stove; then he chopped some ice in a pail and put it in a pot, which he immediately set on the fire. Half the bread that he had brought he crumbled into a bowl, salted it, and waited for the water to boil. He bustled about the room almost noiselessly, and kept stepping over to the bed and gazing at the children. In his blue eyes, so light that they seemed faded, shone that love which peasants feel for their children, who are dearer to them than aught else in the world.

"My orphans, you will have something to eat right away, right away," he whispered joyfully, and kept adding fuel to the fire. When the water began to boil he stepped up to the bed.

"Marysia! Józwa! Get up, children!" he called, shaking them. "Get up and have supper."

They awoke at once. There were five of them, four girls and a little boy about six years old. Tomek took the little fellow in his arms, wrapped the skirt of his sheepskin coat about him and sat down with him in front of the fire. The boy, heavy with sleep, began to cry and make faces.

"Hush, little son, hush! Here's some nice bread that the priest has sent for you children; take it, little son!"

The little fellow rubbed his nose and eyes and munched the bread greedily.

"Well, come on, girls; the brewis is ready."

He poured boiling water on the bread.

They crawled out of the bed, squatted about the bowl, and with amazing greediness applied themselves to the brewis.

The tint of the skin of the children's sallow, emaciated faces had something in common with the color of the ragged, damp, frost-covered walls; it seemed to complement them. Long misery, that peasant misery which slowly lays hold upon throats and gradually strangles them, had eloquently marked those faces. The skin clung to the bones, the eyes had a dull sparkle, the lips were drawn, the whole expression was unusually mobile yet at the same time apathetic. Tomek surveyed the children with a fatherly gaze, seldom touching the bowl himself, in order to leave as much as possible for them. But he gave special attention only to the boy, continually offering him bits of food.

"Eat, little son, eat! Were you very hungry?"

"You see," spoke up Marysia, "at noon I went to the village and Aunt Jadamowa gave me some potatoes. I boiled them and we ate them. But in the evening Józiek and Anka began to cry because their stomachs ached. They were hungry, but all I could do was to put them to bed."

"Eat, children; old Jagustynka gave us this bread and the priest the other. Marysia, here are some millet grits; you can cook them tomorrow. The merciful God will aid us. We'll find some work and then maybe we'll buy a bushel of potatoes or a peck of grits, so that we can get along till spring somehow or other."

"Then we'll buy a cow, shan't we, daddy?" asked Józiek.

The fire burned briskly and the red-hot stove diffused a pleasant warmth, so that a cricket began to chirp somewhere in the corner. The girls sat at their father's feet, huddling together, and gazed at him as at a holy picture. Only Marysia sat a little apart, on a bench, and now and then poked the coals with a stick.

"Will you buy a cow in the spring, daddy, really?"

"Yes indeed, my boy; I'll buy one. You will take it to pasture and Jagusia may go too."

"But she gave me a beating today, daddy!"

"Don't be afraid: I'll whip her and she won't hit you again soon."

"Will you buy a brindled cow, daddy?"

"A brindled cow or a gray one, little son."

"And will Marysia give me some milk, daddy?"

"Yes, my precious darling; she will."

"When, daddy?"

"In the spring, when the Lord Jesus brings warmer weather."

"And why is it so cold now, and not spring at all, daddy?"

"For the joy of the Lord Jesus, and for a warning to sinful people."

"So are we sinful, daddy? Józwa, Marysia, Jagusia, Anka, and I, daddy?"

"We are all sinful, my little son."

"And why are we sinful, daddy?"

"Good Lord! You're such a tiny little chap, and yet you're reasoning about things already."

"Then are all peasants sinful, daddy?"

"Peasants and gentlemen alike, my boy; everybody!"

"And will you buy some sheep, daddy?" he asked again, after a long pause, with difficulty opening his eyes, the lids of which were beginning to stick together.

"Yes, I will buy some for you, my little son. Marysia will spin the wool and make you some trousers."

"And a little jacket with buttons! Like Franek Wawrzon's! Really, daddy? And a skirt for Józwa, and for Anka! Really, daddy?"

"A jacket for you, and a skirt for Józwa, and clothes for all of us. If only the Holy Mother helps us, we shall have everything, my precious darlings."

He carried Józiek to the bed and tucked him in carefully.

"Now go to sleep, children; go to sleep and the night will soon be over."

The children began to say a prayer aloud. Tomek brought in a bundle of straw from the hall way, spread it between the stove and the bed, put out the lamp, wrapped himself in his sheepskin, and lay down to sleep.

Silence pervaded the room, interrupted only by the even breathing of the children and by a quiet sobbing.

"Marysia," he said after a long interval, hearing her weeping; "What is the matter with you, daughter?"

"Nothing, daddy; only it hurts me so that we are so poor, when we have never done any harm to anybody."

"Hush, daughter, don't cry! The priest has promised us help, and he said so beautifully that the Lord Jesus will certainly take pity on us. I shall get some work that will help us out of our trouble. Don't be afraid; the Lord God makes no haste, but He is just."

It was quiet once more; the weeping ceased. Only the cricket that had been awakened by the warmth chirped loudly; and at times the coals in the stove snapped and spread abroad in the darkness a crimson dust, each time fainter than before. A constantly increasing darkness and drowsiness settled down upon the room.

"Marysia, are you asleep?"

"I can't sleep! Sleep has gone far away from me; and whenever I close my eyes I fancy that mamma is standing in front of me, or that some lady in a splendid gown is walking by and beckoning to me, or that the pig that we sold is squealing behind the wall."

"Say a prayer, daughter; never mind, it's only hunger that makes such dreams come into your head. Tomorrow we'll go into the forest, and maybe I can cut some faggots."

"Hm! Aunt Jadamowa says that there is no getting through on the lanes

or on the forest road, for the snow is up to a man's head. Klomb said that the forest clerk had offered ten kopeks extra if only people would cut wood."

"Is any one coming from the village?"

"How can any one be coming, when the snow is so deep that I couldn't get out of the yard when I went for wood?"

They became silent again. A train passed by, so that the hut quivered and there was a threatening creak in the walls. Then only feeble echoes of the horns of the signal men could be heard.

There was absolute stillness, except that the dull roar of the forest and the sharp whistling of the wind penetrated through the window panes. Tomek could not go to sleep; he tossed from side to side and meditated dejectedly.

"Marysia, would you go out to service, daughter?" he asked in a low, anxious voice.

"If you bid me to, daddy, I'll go. The only thing is that I'll be better off myself, but it will be no easier for the rest of you."

Tomek made no reply, and soon they fell asleep.

On the next day their life dragged along the same path. Misery was encircling them with a ring that grew constantly tighter.

At noon they ate the remnant of yesterday's bread and grits.

Tomek merely looked into the children's eyes, patted their heads and said nothing, for despair was tearing his bowels. He crawled around the hut like a man asleep; he cut wood, trimmed some stakes, and prepared to go somewhere, watching the trains that passed by a short distance away. At the hours when he formerly went out to work he went out now too; he walked hastily to the railroad and still more hastily returned, for he bitterly reminded himself that it was useless to go anywhere!

So many years of subjection to mechanical, automatic toil had left a deep imprint on his character — lack of initiative. His self-command was absolutely deserting him, for he did not know how to go on living without work and without land. He had never needed to think of anything himself, since his late wife had done his thinking for him for sixteen years; and before her, the men for whom he had worked. He was one of those peasants to whom some one must needs say: "Go there, do this, think thus," — then he would go and do it. But now along with his disasters the labor of reflection had fallen upon him: so, however much he strove and struggled and writhed helplessly, he could form no plan. Misery bared its teeth at him and was biting his children — and he had sat for whole days, thoughtlessly buried within himself, and could find no means of escape. He did not go to beg of people in the village, for the idea never even occurred to him. All his life he had had to work hard for every morsel, had had to extort it by blood and sweat; nothing had ever come to him as a free gift. So now, if he thought of anything, it was of but one thing, to earn! He had no means of earning — and he fell exhausted.

Only yesterday in the tavern had the thought of cutting faggots dawned upon him, and old Jagustynka had advised him to apply for help to the priest.

In the afternoon, as soon as the cold had moderated a trifle, he took Marysia and went to the clearing, where lay heaps of wood that had been cut in the autumn. These were now so covered with snow that the whole clearing was one level stretch of dazzling whiteness.

"Marysia, can we manage it?" whispered Baran, scratching his head.

"It's the devil of a winter," grumbled the girl gloomily, thrusting her spade into the snow.

Without saying anything further, they set to digging out the fir trees.

They applied themselves feverishly to the work. Tomek did the work of four men and Marysia with a sort of furious passion dug unweariedly, heedless of the sweat that deluged her eyes and of the exhaustion that she soon felt. They hurled themselves at the snow as if it were some hated enemy, the impersonation of all their miseries; they dug their spades into it with wild, stony, peasant obstinacy.

The snow was frozen and almost as hard as ice, so that it was extremely difficult to cut it with the iron spades; work was very slow, and the resistance fairly maddened them. Tomek threw off his sheepskin, beneath which he had nothing but his shirt. Blind to aught but his work, he dug with a sort of fury; his coarse shirt became dark with sweat on his shoulders. He had also thrown off his hat, so that his hair, like a tousled mop, shook at every motion that he made.

"Damn you, curse you!" he muttered now and then with hatred; and only his tortured face, dreadful in its set expression, flashed above the snow like a flame of a bloody violet hue. Marysia occasionally squatted down to catch her breath and rest a bit, but soon she pulled herself together and with new fury tore at the white mass.

And the forest, white from the snow lodged on the branches, surrounded them like a lofty wall; it was quiet and calm as if buried in its winter sleep. At times a bough quivered under its load, and a cascade of white dust fell on the ground. Ravens flew cawing over the forest. Again a whole flock of magpies settled on the tall trees that had been left for seed, teetered on the boughs, flapped their wings, and, as if jeering at Tomek called: "Stupid Baran! Stupid!" They chattered so that Tomek, angered by their mockery, drove them off with chunks of snow. Silence again settled down, filled with the blinding gleam of the snow and the sun and broken only by the creaking of the spades, the whistle of great lumps of snow tossed into the air, and the hoarse, heavy breathing of the diggers.

The hours passed slowly, and the forest imperceptibly began to grow dim and clothe itself in the violet-purple mists of the west. Then it grew grey and slowly absorbed the darkness that was spreading from the coppery glow on the horizon. It darkened and finally seemed gradually to sink

into the depths of the approaching night and to merge into one endless mass with the snowy plain and fall into a sleepy revery.

Darkness was already upon them when they finished their toil. They had cleared three large fir trees.

Tomek straightened up, stretched himself, and striking his spade on the snow, said roughly:

"We've fixed you, you rascals! We've fixed you!" He carefully put on his coat and hat. "Go home to the hut, Marysia. I'll go to the Jew and get my money for the work; tomorrow I can finish a third of a cord easily enough. I'll bring you something to eat right away. Go along, daughter; and wrap yourself up, for you've worked terribly hard, and it grows cold after sunset." He stroked her face affectionately and disappeared in the depths of the forest.

Marysia wrapped her head in her apron, took the spades, and went slowly home through the forest. She felt not so much tired as hungry and very sleepy. At first she walked on without thinking of anything; but soon the forest began to seem to her so threatening and gloomy, it was so strangely black, and there was such a roaring and groaning in the depths of it, that an inexplicable terror overcame her. It seemed to her that countless tree trunks barred her way on all sides, that among them in the distance reddish eyes were glistening and the triangular muzzles of wolves were flashing. She closed her eyes for a moment, but her fright constantly increased. She began to fly along more swiftly; and, already almost beside herself, she sang to keep her courage up:

Soldiers and gallants, now hark to my word:
Attend to your farms, don't be roaming abroad!
Hu ha!

And again:

I fear not the lads, though they come in a crowd;
I fear not the wolves, though the pack may howl loud!
Hu ha!

But the poor little thing was dreadfully afraid.

For his work Tomek received from the forest clerk a ruble in cash and an order for provisions to the value of a ruble and twenty kopeks. The Jew was glad to pay him, for he knew him as an honest man and they sorely needed the faggots for delivery to the railroad.

Early on the next day Baran wrapped the ruble in a rag, had Marysia put on her Sunday clothes, and they started off for church. But the priest would accept nothing for the mass, and was so much touched that he had Tomek presented with a bushel of potatoes and a peck or more of grits.

Tomek confessed himself and through the entire church service lay on the floor of the church, stretched out like a cross. He prayed and implored so fervently, shaking with sobs, he begged so for grace and groaned so piti-

fully in his grief, complaints and entreaties, that the people gazed at him with respect as he lay prone before the altar.

"Jesus! Our Lady of Czenstochowa! Have mercy on me a sinner! I will go to Czenstochowa on foot; every day I will tell my beads; I will buy a banner for the church, I will buy candles! Have mercy on me a sinner! O sweet Virgin! O Queen of Heaven! I offer to Thee myself and my children. Give us help! I will work for any wages, if only I may not go begging; if only my children may not die of hunger! O holy, holy, holy Lord!"

Thus he groaned and wept, with bloody tears of complaint and entreaty, and implored grace.

The organ played a gentle, solemn hymn, which, like a purple wave of melody, floated over his head and filled his heart with holy, tremulous emotion; the voice of the priest seemed to gleam like the rainbow; it so consoled and heartened him that his tears flowed ever more abundantly, ever more gently. The tarnished gilding of the altars, the notes of the bells, the deep sighs of the worshipers, the whispered prayers, the kindly glances of the saints from their pictures, the dim rainbow light that poured in through the colored windows, the yellowish flames of the candles, the almost balsamic rhythm of the music that constantly floated down from the choir — all this, fused into an inexpressibly sweet, almost mystic harmony, kept Tomek even more humbly prostrate at the feet of the Almighty and inspired him with boundless confidence, consolation, and faith, so that at the end of the mass he could not collect his thoughts, but merely sighed, kissed the floor, and wept.

He left the church with his faith and his eagerness for work redoubled.

"Marysia!" he said when they were about half way home, and he paused for a moment, since the girl had been walking behind him. "Marysia, it seems to me that the Lord Jesus will give us aid, for did not his Reverence say that He is mindful of the lilies and the birds and even of the least of all worms? Then must not the beloved Jesus care for a man? Must he not?"

"The Lord Jesus must certainly care equally for all His creatures," she answered seriously.

Life now seemed brighter to him, since they had food for two or three days in the house and the cold had perceptibly moderated; at noon there had even been a slight thaw. Yet Tomek sensed a change in the air, for the sun had begun to be overcast and masses of thin grey clouds veiled the horizon. Hence he once more became uneasy.

"A snowstorm is brewing, but never mind. The Lord Jesus will blow and scatter it all away," he said to the children, as he went out into the forest to cut wood. Before evening he had piled up a quarter of a cord, but he had wearied himself frightfully. He went to sleep in a happy frame of mind, for the children had something to eat, and he felt that he himself had resumed his former way of life: he was at work.

On the next morning, when he awoke and looked out of doors, he became gloomy.

The snow was falling so fast that nothing could be seen, and the wind roared and whistled. A blizzard was coming on; there would be deep drifts, and there could be no thought of cutting wood in the forest.

And since the snow was heaping up, the winds brawling and contending on the fields, and the whole world growing dark, it was hard even to go outside of the hut.

There was almost no distinction between day and night. The grey, gloomy orgy of the hurricane rushed over the fields and plains and beat in powerful waves against Baran's hut and against the forest, which merely bent down in its struggle with the tempest, but rose again unconquered and terrible, for it became embittered by the struggle and roared, cracked and snapped, howled and bellowed wildly and protractedly, so that the children could not sleep at night and the birds fled from the woods to the fields. Tomek watched over the hut, which threatened to fall; finally he covered it completely with snow, so that it looked like a snowy mound.

Their provisions were exhausted and they had no money to buy fresh ones; furthermore the roads and fields were so heaped with snow that they could not have gone for them. On the second day of the blizzard trains became stuck in the drifts and all movement ceased entirely; men retired in alarm and gave place to the elements. Only on the morning of the third day did the tempest somewhat abate, but gigantic drifts smoked like craters with clouds of dusty snow.

Tomek put on his sheepskin, took a shovel, and went to the railroad track. The foreman, his assistants, the division engineer, and crowds of peasants brought in from the neighboring villages were all busy around a train that had got buried in a cut. They were distributing liquor and sausages to the workmen, in order to clear the track as quickly as possible.

In the white clouds of snowy dust Tomek saw hundreds of human silhouettes working merrily; he heard noisy talk, laughter, and the creaking of shovels. He eagerly took in all these sounds but grew more and more gloomy, since for him there was no place and no work. No one summoned him to labor. Chilled, hungry, and despairing, he stood at the crossing for a couple of hours, till he caught sight of the boss, bowed down to his feet and very humbly asked him for a job.

"You know, Baran, that a circular letter, sent all along the line, states that you were discharged for stealing, and that you must not be hired for any work on the road. What can I do for you, my dear man?"

Tomek made no reply, only sadly hung his head and crawled off to his hut.

"Brutes! Brutes, damn 'em!" he burst forth. He was so infuriated that he broke his shovel; and, when he reached home, flogged Marysia and kicked Józiek. He rushed about the room like a madman, tearing his hair;

but, since this did him no good and he soon became exhausted, he calmed down and waited patiently once more.

There was no news from the priest. The days dragged by frightfully slowly and in frightful hunger. One evening, after an all-day fast, Tomek had an idea.

The children kept crying. Józiek quietly complained that his chest ached and that something was gnawing at his stomach; he was feverish and in his sleep he tossed about, cried out, and begged for bread.

"Don't cry, son; I'll bring you something to eat," said Baran laconically. He took a sack and an ax, and started out towards the manor.

He waded through snow waist-deep, but managed to reach the stables where he had recently seen the dogs at their banquet. He searched for carrion; he groped in the snow with his feet and with the handle of the ax, but found nothing. He was about to abandon his fruitless quest, when he heard a low growling from the upper end of the building, and went towards it.

A half-dozen dogs were tearing at a sheep and growling. He scattered them with his ax. The dogs were loth to retire and gnashed their teeth at their rival.

Tomek selected the least tainted portions of the sheep, put them in his sack, which he threw over his shoulders, and started for home.

The dogs rushed after him, snarling; they jumped at his sack, tore at his sheepskin, and pressed upon him furiously. He drove them away with his ax and ran on at his best speed, but he fell into a ditch concealed beneath the snow. The dogs leaped upon him. There ensued a brief struggle, from which he came forth victorious, — but with his sheepskin torn at the shoulder, with a bitten hand, and with a disfigured face.

Two dogs were howling with pain, rolling over in the snow and staining it with their blood; the rest had scattered. Tomek gathered himself together with difficulty and crawled slowly homeward with his booty.

"Here is something to eat," he said to Marysia, throwing down his sack in the middle of the room.

They had something to eat; but Józiek, his best beloved child, fell seriously ill on the day after that repast.

He lay on the bed, red and swollen, perspiring all over, and so weak that he could not raise his head. Tomek fairly beat his head against the wall in his despair and anguish over his only son; finally he went to try to procure medicine.

The dairyman of the manor, who carried on a secret traffic in certain drugs, gave him some powders on credit, and some provisions as well. The powders were of no avail, for on the next day Józiek lay unconscious and only muttered disconnected words in his delirium.

As a last resource, Tomek rushed off to fetch old Jagustynka, who knew how to treat all diseases. Whether a man's hair was matted by the plica

or he suffered from some internal ailment; whether a peasant must be freed from a spell that had been cast on him or a child suffering from colic must be "laid out," she was equal to every occasion, healing by means of charms or herbs.

She came with him at once, but fairly clutched her head when she saw the sick boy.

"Good God! Only the Lord Jesus can help him!" she whispered.

"Do your best, woman! Heal my belovèd boy."

"We must lay him out, or fumigate him and say charms over him. I don't know anything else to do."

"Do anything, but do not let my darling child die! Lord! Such a strong little fellow! Next spring he could have taken the cows to pasture. And he was such a gentle, clever, good boy! O Lord!" Tomek groaned and wept.

"If the Lord Jesus loves any one, he gives him all gifts. But, Tomek, the holy father told me that you must go to the station right away; the superintendent will be there — he is coming to look over those drifts. Go right away; only do not be proud: bow down to his knees politely and beg of him. The priest told me that he himself would come later and talk with him."

"And leave the boy?"

"Go along. I will look after the boy and do what needs to be done for him."

"You are so kind, woman, that one of my own kin could not be better."

"Well, why should I not be kind?"

"Other women have not so much consideration."

"That's because others think only of their husbands and children and home troubles. Well, go along!"

Tomek set out for the station, though at a lingering pace.

The old woman brought from the village some herbs and a gray covered earthenware pot, in which she started to boil some mixture. She stripped Józiek and laid him out in the center of the hut, spreading beneath him a bundle of clean straw. He lay quiet and hardly breathed; he was unconscious.

Then she threw into the pot a bit of wax from a holy candle. As soon as it had dissolved in the boiling water, she began to rub the lad with the mixture, muttering some unintelligible words.

The girls cowered under the stove and watched the ceremony with terror.

With the water that remained from the rubbing the old woman marked a sort of triangle, in the center of which lay Józiek. Then, stepping to the first corner of the room, she said in a loud voice and with unction: "A drop to the black and a pint to the white!" She poured out a drop in the corner and slopped a whole stream on the floor. This she repeated three

times. Then she took the earthenware lid of the pot, laid on it some glowing coals, and on them sprinkled dry bits of sheep's dung, some dried flowers of shepherd's purse, and half a garland of sundew that had been blessed on the seventh day after Corpus Christi. She blew nine times, until it was all aglow and a thin stream of smoke floated in the air; then she began to fumigate the boy lying on the floor and to whisper a formula of purification.

Next she fumigated the walls. Finally she went out of doors and, heedless of the drifts, walked three times around the hut, not pausing for breath and ceaselessly fumigating.

The boy still lay stretched out motionless. His body was covered with bluish spots; it was swollen, dry, and shining.

Jagustynka, after rubbing him once more with the water, wrapped him in a piece of cloth, and put him on the bed. Then she attended to the other children.

Meanwhile Tomek had found the superintendent at the station, where he caught sight of him walking with the foreman in the huge, magnificently dirty third-class waiting room. He at once took his stand at the door, erect as a flagpole, and waited, for he dared not go a step farther.

But they strolled back and forth, so engrossed in their conversation that they did not even notice his arrival. Whenever they came near him, Tomek drew himself up still more stiffly and opened his mouth; but since they turned about very quickly, he was always too late. Finally, after a long interval of waiting for an opportunity, he gathered up his courage and said in a choked and trembling voice:

"I beg the attention of his Honor the Superintendent."

The superintendent did not hear, for the foreman was saying in a low voice:

"I permit myself, superintendent, to call your attention to the fact that the policy of the Vatican is unfavorable to us, and that the flirtations of the Roman Curia with the France of today —"

"A magnificent country, magnificent!" whispered the superintendent, adjusting his monocle.

"The land of revolutionists, of Masons, of atheism; the land of eternal anarchy!"

"Yes, but also the land of the Second Empire."

"Do you incline to what is termed Bonapartism, superintendent?"

"Above all else, I incline to Parisism, to the royal rule of Paris over the world," — and he smiled sweetly at his memories of the cosmopolitan brothel and plucked delicately at his grizzled and truly senatorial beard.

"I beg the attention of his Honor the Superintendent," said Tomek once more, but somewhat louder, for he had grown impatient, and his anxiety about Józiek was constantly increasing.

"Were you long in Paris, sir?"

"Fifteen years. A moment, I tell you, a splendid moment."

He became silent. The foreman twirled his luxuriant mustaches, while the superintendent cast a melancholy glance at his own nails and twirled his monocle.

"I beg the attention of his Honor the Superintendent," Tomek almost shouted, for the thought that at home Józiek might be dying filled him with such acute fear that he now was at a loss what to do.

Hearing him, the superintendent came to a standstill, carefully put the monocle in his eye, and said:

"Ha! What do you wish, friend?"

Tomek threw himself at his feet and began to speak rapidly and disconnectedly:

"I was discharged, your Honor; they fired me. I was employed here fifteen years and now I'm out of a job. They won't take me back. My five motherless children are left without bread. I've come to beg the mercy of your Honor the Superintendent. I'm so worn out with misery that I can't catch my breath. I know all kinds of railroad work. I had a good record."

"May I say, superintendent, that this is Tomek Baran, a section hand, who was discharged for stealing railway iron."

"I did not steal, your Hon—, the Superin—, but they fired me. I took nothing; I would say so at holy confession. They fired me, poor fellow, and took the pension money I had earned, and deducted from my wages, and took my deposit. I was left with nothing at all — like this finger!"

"He might have been called before the criminal court," whispered the overseer, looking out of the window indifferently.

"You see, friend; you deserved a prison sentence," said the superintendent with dignity.

"Why should I go to the criminal court? Did I kill anybody? Did I steal anything?" shouted Tomek fiercely and trembled all over with sudden fury.

"The affair was mercifully hushed up, for he has many children."

"They did not put you in jail, for they had pity on your children! You should be grateful!" repeated the superintendent slowly and solemnly.

"I have come to ask for justice. The foreman knows how they treated me. The foreman himself —"

"A denunciation! Here you have a specimen of our dear people, superintendent!"

"Neither my father nor his father ever denounced anybody, and I never will either. I'll say to his face how it happened. And the pension money that it took me fifteen years to earn I won't give up, even if I lose the interest, and I won't give up my deposit."

"He cannot receive his pension deposits, for the law is clear on the point."

"The law means what is just, and is it just to turn out an innocent man? Is it just not to return him the money that was deducted from his hard-earned wages for so many years? Is it just? I'll go to court and prove my rights, for I've been wronged!" shouted Tomek, getting more and more excited.

"It's no use talking with the fellow here! Don't you know the instructions?"

"I know this, that the authorities wrote down the instructions for their own use, and that they're slow about giving justice to poor people. Any louse or other vermin knows how to cheat."

"Be silent, fellow! What do you mean, curse you? Are you going to shout and brawl here?" cried the foreman with an aristocratic air.

"I've been injured, and so I'll shout."

"You're a thief; you're nothing but a brute."

"I a thief! You pestilential upstart, I a thief! You scoundrel! I!" cried Tomek, clenching his fists and unconsciously moving forward.

"Porter! Turn out this booby; and if he doesn't quiet down, call the police! Come on, superintendent. Such beasts! The only way you can deal with them is with a stick."

They went out on the platform.

"I'll count your ribs for you, you upstart; I'll make you feel worse than the rickets, you mad dog!" whispered Tomek, and such a hurricane of wrath and hatred flooded his heart and brain that beads of perspiration came out on his brow. He shook all over in a spasm of fury, and had a mad desire to run after the foreman, to seize him by the throat and beat him — beat him — beat him! Yet he quickly shook off this feeling, went out of the station, and sped home with all his might.

In the hut he found a crowd of people. Józiek was already dying.

The boy, with a holy candle in his hand, lay on his back, stiff as a rod, and was wheezing, with difficulty inhaling the air through his parched lips.

Peasants from the village were kneeling about the bed, repeating the litany after old Andrzej the sacristan. Their faces were stern, and in their eyes lurked an expression of calm, almost stony resignation. The girls, sisters of the dying boy, were weeping and wailing loudly. Throughout the whole room, which was filled with the yellow gleams of the candlelight, there was an atmosphere of tragedy.

"Jesus Maria! Jesus Maria!" moaned Tomek, with his bewildered eyes fixed on the face of his only son, and he tore his hair in helpless despair.

"Quiet, Tomek, quiet!" said Jagustynka to him consolingly, in a low voice. "The Lord Jesus is pleased to take the little soul into his own glorious heaven, so what can you, a feeble worm, do to oppose him? What?"

"My little son, my belovèd child, my silver and gold!" groaned Tomek.

"I fumigated him, I laid him out — and it did not help. Thy will be done, O Lord!"

"From all despair! —" whispered the sacristan in a trembling voice. "Deliver us, O Lord!" answered the women hastily.

This whisper of burning voices, of sighs, of weeping, of dejection, spread through the room like a golden stream and came back to the dying boy, who lay in the glory of the candle light, who was stretched out even more rigidly, who opened his lips more widely and who tugged with his left hand at the coat that covered his bosom.

"Oh, my little golden son! Oh, my belovèd child!" wailed Tomek. "You are leaving us, my darling baby, you are leaving us! You pay no heed to your father's weeping; you have no pity for our desolation; you leave us alone in our misery! And, dearest child, you are going to Jesus! Oh! Oh! Oh!"

"Oh, darling brother, don't desert us; dearest boy, don't leave us!" groaned Marysia, supporting the candle for him.

"From everlasting damnation deliver us, O Lord!" sounded the voices again, more strongly.

"You will never drive the cows, my belovèd boy. You will not pull your sisters' hair, my son; you will not run off to the village. You will never watch for the birds in the spring; you will not, you will not."

"Do not weep, Tomek, for —"

"From sudden and unlooked-for death deliver us, O Lord!"

"And this morning he was saying: 'Daddy,' he says, 'I won't die. Daddy, don't let Death take me, daddy; I won't leave you.' And he whimpered so, like a puppy that sees destruction and death. Oh, how wretched we are; how wretched! How can I relieve you, my son; how can I! The poor little fellow, something hurt him inside, for he just held on to his precious little stomach and groaned with pain. He said a prayer with Marysia, while the precious tears were rolling in a stream down his cheeks; and he shook all over, like an aspen!"

Józiek all at once ceased wheezing. He opened his lips with a long, hoarse expiration, trembled violently with his whole body, and raised his head a trifle. Then, with a wandering glance at those standing by, he fell back on the pillow; and, stretched out stiff, his glassy eyes fixed on the ceiling and with a terrible suppressed cry on his dumb lips, he died.

The candle fell from his hands, his fingers relaxed, his face became serene; he was now indifferent to all happiness and to all misery.

There arose an appalling weeping and wailing.

"Be quiet, people;" called Jagustynka, opening the doors wide; "be quiet even if you say no prayers. Let the little soul depart in peace; let not your lamenting withhold it from the dear Jesus."

Quiet was restored, and soon all except the old woman dispersed to their homes.

Till the moment of the burial Tomek felt so overwhelmed with grief and despair at the loss of his only son that for whole days he sat motionless by the stove, oblivious of all about him. He seemed to wrap himself in his own sorrow; he felt that an iron hand had seized his soul and was crushing it so terribly that from very excess of pain he could neither move nor cry out.

He followed the body to the grave, and had enough self-possession to support the coffin on the cart; but he gazed blankly at men and at the world; he hardly heard the chants or the words of comfort of which the peasants and the priest were not chary.

"Death is certainly laying hold of me," he thought, feeling within him a strange calm. Peace was descending on his soul.

"I suppose I'm going to die!" he whispered as he returned home alone from the cemetery. The priest had detained the peasants and was addressing them with deep feeling, but Tomek paid no heed to this, though he heard his own name mentioned. He went his solitary way and gazed now at the broad fields, strewn with downy snow and marked here and there with pear trees, now at the bright sky, now at the golden disk of the sun. He fancied that the whole world was slowly swaying like a bell, and that the sun was beating on the black walls of the forests as on bronze towers, and that sweet sounds, like the rustling of ripening grain, like the murmur of the forests in midsummer, like the twittering of birds in the thatch, were enfolding him, filling his brain and his soul with a great sweetness, and rocking him, rocking him into ever deeper and deeper slumber.

"I suppose I'm going to die," he thought, being unable to comprehend what was going on within him.

He reached his hut and took his usual seat, no longer seeing what was going on around him. He had struggled with life as best he could, but this last blow had entirely exhausted him. Now he knew that he could accomplish nothing for himself, that he must perish: so everything became indifferent to him; with stony resignation he bowed his head and submitted to fate. He thought neither of himself, nor of the children who were left to him, nor of anything — he merely awaited the end.

He distinguished that a dozen people had come into the room, that they were walking about him, that they were saying something — but he understood nothing. He stretched himself out on the bench with his back to the room, pulled his sheepkin over his head, and lay there as if dead.

"Friend," began Czerwiński, who had come in with the rest, and who saw that Tomek was apparently unaware of their arrival. "Friend, it is plain that you are in trouble!"

Tomek turned away slightly and said in a dull, choked voice: "I shall surely die; death is certainly laying hold of me."

"Friend, your thoughts are sinful. Just listen to what Czerwiński is telling you. We have come here with good will, to comfort and help you as

best we may. You are a poor man, Tomek, and an honest one; but you are too proud. You went to beg aid of the gentry, but we are nearer to you. Of course no one came to force his help on you, for each man has his own misery eating into him, a wife that keeps nagging him, and his own troubles to think of — but there is no meat without a bone, and no man with a heart of stone. Just take notice what Czerwiński is telling you. We waited for you to come and say to us, as to brothers: 'Here, help me! I am in trouble. Give me some money, either for me to work off later, or as a loan, or as a free gift.' We would have given it to you, for we know that you have been wronged and that you are poor. We are your own countrymen and Christians; only apes bite each others' legs: men have to hold together. We have come to an agreement, and each of us has brought what he could. Take our gifts, Tomek, and may they bring you health!"

"*In secula seculorum ament!*" concluded the sacristan piously.

The women began to untie parcels, unfold aprons, and open baskets. Each one laid down beside Tomek what she had brought: a loaf of bread, or some potatoes, or grits, or a few quarts of meal, or a lump of rock salt, or a string of mushrooms, or a side of bacon, or a dried cheese. Finally Jagustynka put down a hen that she had tied up.

"It is laying, Tomek," she said. "You will have eggs, and chickens in the spring."

Tomek raised himself up on the bench, gazed at them all, listened, and marveled. Slowly his heart began to throb, a pleasant warmth ran over him, and his throat began to choke more and more, so that finally he could no longer restrain himself, but burst out into loud sobs.

"Belovèd brothers, Christian people, how can I ever repay you!" he whispered through his tears. But without letting him speak further they clasped him in their arms and kissed him. He returned their embraces, bowed down to the feet of the older visitors, thanked them, and trembled all over with emotion.

"You can repay us by friendly conduct, or even by your prayers," said Czerwiński sententiously.

"*Dominus vobiscum ament,*" put in the sacristan.

"Furthermore, by the advice of his Reverence, we have decided, in order to make it easier for you to live through the winter, that until spring comes I will take Józwa; Klomb, Marysia; Gulbas, Jagusia; and Boryna will take Anka. The girls will not suffer under our care, and you can get a fresh start better by yourself. Jagustynka says that she will move over to your place, so that you may have some one to cook for you and a woman to look after the house."

"I will stay with you, Tomek, for I am alone in the world too. I won't eat you out of house and home; I can earn a bit myself, and it will be better for me anyhow to have a man to protect me."

"Good Lord, friends, this kindness of yours fairly makes spring in my heart!"

"You are so used to misery that we have to pull you out of it by main force."

"If the cart be not your own, leave it even though you drown."

"*Ora pro nobis Domine ament!*" added the sacristan. He took from his pocket a flask of liquor, cleared his throat, poured out a glassful, and resumed:

"Gentlemen, on this occasion the Holy Scripture saith: '*Ave maristeli deo gratiasament.*' *" Here he drained his glass. "As it is good to drink a bit of whiskey in order to drive out ill humors from the belly, so do you, Tomek Baran, drink. And then let us say a prayer in behalf of thy son Józef, of blessed memory — and *mea culpa, mea maxima culpa ament.*"

They seated themselves wherever they could find places, comforted themselves with a bit of whiskey, had a bite of bread, sang pious songs in honor of the dead boy — and dispersed.

On the next day the women came to take home the girls.

It was hard for Tomek to part with them, for they wept, fell at his feet, and begged him not to give them up; but Baran had made his resolve: so he merely called out roughly:

"Get along, or I'll flog you within an inch of your life."

But as soon as they were gone, he went out into the forest and wandered about all day.

The winter had begun to moderate, great thaws had come, and so much snow had disappeared that the forest resounded with the ceaseless din of axes cutting faggots.

Tomek went out to work every day.

He felt lonesome without the girls, especially in the evening when he came home from work. Though supper was always ready, he missed the children's heads around the bowl and yearned for the prattling of Józiek.

Now and then one of the girls would run in from the village, sit for a few moments, and talk about her benefactors and what she had to eat and to wear. Then she would hurry away for she was eager to get back to the village and to people; and she found that ragged, miserable hut a trifle oppressive. Tomek understood this perfectly, for once, when Marysia had just left, he commented on it to Jagustynka. The old woman, by the way, in what time she had left from her petty household duties, was always spinning flax, carding wool, or winding her yarn into skeins.

"My dear dead boy would never have deserted me like that," said Tomek; "he never would. Girls are good, and mine are too; but all the same — they are nothing but girls," and he waved his hand.

"To be sure, I am a woman myself, but I can tell you, there is nothing like a boy. He's quicker to go astray, but he's quicker at work too. If he were as old as Marysia, wouldn't he be working on the railroad now?"

* Here and elsewhere the sacristan's Latin is of a peasant variety.

"He'd certainly be at work there. Though they won't give me a job, they'd give him one."

Immediately this brought back to him his misfortune and his wrongs. At last he asked the old woman:

"Why is it, woman, that, though we and the gentry have the same speech and the same faith, they snarl at us like dogs and won't give us a decent word; if they can cheat us, they cheat us — and they or the Jews own everything?"

"Why? It's the devil's doing, nothing else. And why does the devil keep little souls in pitch, like hemp in water?" she inquired, as she started her spindle.

"I suppose it's because the souls are sinful."

"And if folks are stupid, aren't they sinful?"

"And why are they stupid?"

"Oh, if everybody knew *why*, and *how*, and *what for!* Then no man would hold another by the neck like an eel, or crush in his breast as if he were a hog being slaughtered. He would not!"

"It is wrong."

"If it is so, it must be so."

"Sure. No peasant's head will ever make it better."

"No other head will either, even if it be as learned as the priest's, or some other clergyman's."

"Well then?"

"Well, it'll get better of itself when the time comes. Just notice: why don't they sow oats when it's time to dig potatoes?"

"When winter's coming it's no time to sow oats."

"Why don't you go out to the fields with a plow or harrow at Candlemas? Why don't they clip sheep at Shrovetide? Because that's not the right time; because the Lord Jesus has settled the times and seasons for everything. Just notice how all this is God's holy law."

"True, woman, I notice it; but it makes me sick to think that even if a man wishes to get some good thing ahead of time, he just can't."

"Oh! Every man must always be wishing, but he must watch his time too. In spring the time comes to plant potatoes and to sow oats: then if you don't wish to plant and don't wish to sow, will you have anything to eat at digging time? Will you have anything to harvest when harvest time comes?"

"True, woman, true! You have a wise way of thinking, I swear."

"Every man must think for himself and for others, for the swine will never think for men."

"True, woman, true!"

Thus Tomek Baran and old Jagustynka conversed during the long March evenings.

Jugoslavia

INTRODUCTION

A MAJORITY of the population of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, established in 1919, speak essentially the same language. In common with several other European literatures, that of present-day Jugoslavia is based on a common store of folk-material. It did not develop to any great extent until the Nineteenth Century.

In this volume a Croatian tale has been chosen as characteristic of modern Jugoslav literature, first because the Croatian writers have excelled in the form, and because Gjalski is one of the greatest figures of the day.

LJUBA BABIC-GJALSKI

(1854-)

GJALSKI[1] (born in 1854) is the most prolific and popular fiction writer of modern Croatia. He has specialised in the depiction of the country people of his own land. The tale that follows is an absorbing mystery story, written with extraordinary skill. It was first published in 1890.

The story appears here for the first time in English. It was especially translated by John J. Batistich and George R. Noyes, and is published by permission of the author and of the translators.

THE DREAM OF DOCTOR MISIC

FROM time immemorial the Jabučevac manor house had been famous as the abode of ghosts, apparitions, and sundry other marvels. It was an old wooden structure, very much battered. Its first lords had died long ago and subsequent holders, for some reason or other, had never succeeded in keeping possession very long: ownership of the manor changed hands every five or six years. At last a Jew got hold of the estate: the land he leased to farmers, but the house he left empty and deserted. From year to year the wretched dwelling presented a more and more pitiful appearance, and every autumn the wind blew more and more shingles from its roof. This wobegone appearance increased the already evil repute of the house, so that not even the most drunken villager would pass it at night without crossing himself piously and devoutly.

But the time came when a tenant was found for the deserted place. A new doctor was appointed for the district. As it was impossible for him to find a house in the district seat or elsewhere in the neighborhood, he was forced to accept the manor for his new abode. The ill-fame of his chosen home did not bother him in the least. He was only afraid of the rats and mice and of the dilapidated roof. So that when the roof was patched up and the house cleaned, Dr. Mišić was thoroughly satisfied

[1] On the title-page of most of his books the author's name is Ksaver Sandor Gjalski. In his recent letters he signs himself Ljuba Babic-Gjalski. His name seems originally to have been Babic; then he wrote under the name of Gjalski, (the name of one of his grandfathers), and then probably combined the two. In the library of Congress, Washington, the name is Ljubomir Babic. There are other variations. I use the form suggested by his agent and translator. B.H.C.

with his new home. And when he learned from his neighbor Batoric that he was distantly related to the first lords of the manor, the noble family of the Jabukoci, he felt as though he were in his ancestral home. To the gossip that was in circulation concerning the manor house and its horrors, he paid no attention, nor did it worry him for a moment. How could he, a man of science — real, experimental, positive science — imbued with the ideas of "the enlightened nineteenth century," believe in things upon which he could not put his finger, and which he could not prove experimentally! Especially in such nonsense as ghosts, prophetic dreams, and so on! His modern intellect, with its cold logic, was so far removed from all that, that "magnificus" Radičević, who tried to explain all these stories in terms of the fourth dimension, appeared to him mentally unbalanced; and the elderly ladies, still saturated with romanticism, who forced themselves into believing such tales, impressed him as immeasurably stupid. To their awed questions whether he had already seen any apparitions, he could only answer by laughing in their faces with gay, carefree, almost Homeric laughter. Indeed, the reputation of the manor was actually pleasing to him. It afforded him many pleasantries in society, and in his work it did him no harm.

Despite the fearful reputation of the manor, people would come to it, and the doctor's waiting room was always filled with patients. Of course, at night no one would come. "At least the night is my own!" the doctor would say contentedly to himself; and every night he went to bed feeling positive that he should not be disturbed by any emergency calls. "That's a bad enough business in the city, but here in the village, with these abominable roads, gullies and ditches!" he would mutter, despite all his devotion to his calling.

He was a very capable and serious man, who had passed his first youth. His age may have been thirty-four. He was not married, nor did he contemplate marrying in the near future. Devotion to his calling was uppermost in his mind. A physician's duty he likened to that of a soldier. Both physician and soldier must always be ready for any sacrifice. "There are in our calling thousands of situations which are very similar to those in battle, where bullets fly about your head. Much too frequently it is a very precarious kind of business. How then can a man assume the additional burden of a wife!" Moreover he was not overconfident of his health. His parents had died early; his mother had been afflicted with a serious nervous disease. "I am not conscious of any illness; but still you never can tell — 'an apple never falls far from the tree.' It would not do to leave a widow behind me," he would usually reply to the solicitations and advice of relatives and friends.

But there was still another reason why he had never ventured on matrimony. He had never in his life been in love. This was not because his temperament was cold and phlegmatic. On the contrary, his was one of those

fiery and passionate natures that because of their very fire and passion cannot confide their feelings and desires to one single beauty. He was carried away and inflamed by every beauty. It could be said that he loved the whole of the fair sex, with their fine and graceful forms, their soft flesh, their luxuriant hair and the grace of their sweet and delicate motions. He never spoke in his enthusiasm of any particular fair woman that might catch his artistic eye, inflame his blood, and inebriate his spirit. Instead of any single woman he would glorify the whole sex as such, its wondrous Juno-like forms as such, its charming and captivating Venus-like lines as such. And in the dark flashing glance of a lovely woman whom he embraced, he would always behold the glance of the whole sex and the glance of beauty personified. This enthusiasm kept him from sinking into the mire of ordinary animal passion. His desires left his soul pure because he always yearned for perfection; in it alone could he find means to quench the thirst of his soul and body. With this attitude toward the fair sex, there was nothing to prevent him from devoting himself with his whole heart to the medical profession, which carried him to the highest spiritual levels.

Such was Doctor Mišić. — His life in the Jabučevac manor house he made comfortable. In a short time he acquired the reputation of a capable and conscientious physician, so that his practice yielded him a goodly income, despite the proverbial slowness of the nobility in paying for doctors' visits. Little by little the old house lost a great deal of its rustiness and acquired a certain amount of respectability. But the manor retained its evil reputation. The doctor to be sure, remained of necessity as much of an unbeliever as ever, although he used the worst reputed chamber in the house as his bed room. But the servants! With them the poor doctor was always having difficulties. They were continually giving up their positions and deserting him. And despite the fact that he was kind to them and that he never supervised their manipulation of wine, coffee and sugar, but let them manage everything, no one would stay with him longer than a month. Every man and woman would leave him with tearful eyes, kissing his hands and assuring him that he or she was not leaving the household on his account — the master was so kind — but because he could not stand any longer the frightful nights, with their unearthly noises and apparitions. One of the servants saw strange shadows, another saw flames dancing, and a third even insisted that a spook had come to shave him; and what is more, a fat cook was able to repeat whole conversations she had had with the souls of the departed and begged the good doctor to flee the accursed house immediately. Of course she did not tell of the bottles of rum that she had stolen and consumed but the doctor guessed how she had acquired her extraordinary gift of conversing with the denizens of the world beyond, and he laughed more than ever at the fables and stories. Naturally he himself never heard or saw anything unusual. Any knocking, or noises, or

rapping he could explain every time as due to rats, mice or wind. Finally he got used to that sort of thing also, and he slept soundly every night, to the great disappointment of his neighbor Radičević, who earnestly hoped that the doctor's experience in the old house would drive him into the camp of the adherents of the fourth dimension. The doctor's quiet nights brought still more disappointment to Baroness Albahic who would ask him every day how he had slept the preceding night, and whether he had seen anything, and who upon receiving a negative answer would frown with displeasure.

So passed about eight months. The doctor's nights continued to be equally quiet; but every morning — for some time — he had felt a sort of spiritual uneasiness, or rather a sort of melancholy that weighed heavily on his serene self. It was a strange, new experience. Occasionally he would feel an urge to give vent to his tears, as though affected by some great sorrow. During such moments it seemed as though his sunny nature had left him forever. The day's tasks would disperse this feeling, but almost every morning it would come back. He could not explain this new experience. His life passed in a quiet and simple fashion and there was not a single incident in his life that should have disturbed or depressed him. On the contrary everything that happened should have made him contented. The reason then lay within himself. At first he thought of a possible attack of some serious malady; but he dismissed this idea instantly — physically he had rarely felt better. Then he remembered certain forebodings. His departed mother had always insisted that she could foretell the future. At first thought he regarded this idea as so ridiculous and absurd that he rejected it immediately. He, an intelligent man, thoroughly imbued with modern science, could not give himself to such mystic interpretation of phenomena. He simply could not bring himself to believe in presentiments. In the end he ascribed the occurrences to gastric causes. "There must be some disorder in my digestion which deranges the circulation of my blood, and this in turn causes unpleasant dreams which, because of my sound sleeping, leave nothing except this melancholy feeling when I wake up." So argued Doctor Mišić with himself; and with this physiological explanation he was thoroughly satisfied, convinced that he had hit upon the truth, or, as he put it, that he had made a true diagnosis. He now decided to subject himself to a stricter diet. He became very careful of what and when he ate and drank. He was also careful not to overwork. But despite these precautions his inner struggles did not disappear. He then became nervous and excited. Every little thing that fell down made him jump and tremble all over, and he felt an acute pain as if he had received a blow over his temples. The clinking of two glasses together was enough to send a bolt through his head that would daze him. An ever deeper melancholy descended upon his spirit. There were moments in which he was sad to the utmost degree. He was on the verge of bursting

into tears. And yet he could not account for such sadness. It had no content or visible form. It was like a hoarse, deep roaring, or a dark impenetrable remoteness.

Mišić became completely changed. His friends noticed the change. It was once the subject of conversation at the home of magnificus Radičević. Dr. Mišić still defended his diagnosis.

"You are mistaken," interrupted the magnificus eagerly. "You cannot explain it in terms of your physiology. You yourself admit that your digestion is in perfect order. Your supposed dreams, then, cannot be caused by indigestion. It is what I have always told you. The Jabučevac manor is recognized as an excellent medium for communication with a world that is beyond our five senses, and that has more than three dimensions. In that excellent medium you yourself cannot help coming into some sort of rapport with that world. If you had different nerves, and if you were more accessible to the establishment of such a rapport, your impressions would undoubtedly be clearer and stronger. But because you are dense and because you refuse to believe — eh — then from that rapport into which you have entered with the other world nothing remains in your consciousness except this melancholy feeling. If you would yield and believe in that impression — eh — who knows what you could see, learn, and hear."

The doctor had to laugh heartily at Radičević. And the whole group followed his example. Still the conversation continued in the same vein. Mišić, to be sure, did not undertake to refute Radičević; but the parish priest, the Reverend Lacica Kuntek, developed his views concerning the world of spirits, and a lively debate ensued. At last "illustrissimus" Batorić spoke up. As usual he would not suffer a conversation to drift into jocular channels or to become the mere telling of boresome and impossible stories.

"I do not agree with our Škender, Doctor, but I cannot subscribe to your beliefs either! You merely deny the efficacy of premonitions and prophetic dreams. Experience shows that you are wrong. History itself recognizes dreams that have foretold the future. It recognizes premonitions, too. These facts cannot be denied. You explain your melancholy as a mere remnant of an unpleasant dream which is caused by physiological phenomena. I am willing to interpret your melancholy as a fragment of your dream; but I am convinced that a man's soul finds strength in dreams, that in them it sees the world more clearly and penetratingly than it does in its waking hours. To be sure, it acquires this strength only in the most profound of dreams. It may be that you have such dreams, in which something of the future is revealed to you, something which presages evil for you. It is only on rare occasions that dreams leave complete pictures in one's mind; and when they do, the pictures are usually symbolical. You sleep soundly, and such pictures are obliterated from your

mind. But then one never can tell. Everything is so speculative! Be it as it may, do not be too much alarmed."

"Do not worry, illustrissime," retorted the Doctor, laughing again. "At any rate, I am not going to be frightened by any prophetic dreams. It is possible, however, that I may worry over my nerves and digestion. But I shall try to counteract this by a proper diet."

"All right, then. For that reason the toastmaster must absolve you from the duty of drinking a toast to the Jabučevac ghosts. Mark, Janko, he is not going to drink with us. Hey, Doctor, it is possible that there is some beauty among the ghosts, and then you may regret that we drank to her health, and that you didn't!" joked the old man.

But the Doctor was firm — he did not touch his glass. And when no one had as yet even dreamed of leaving the party, he stole away unobserved and went directly home.

He made his diet even more strict. He cut out his suppers entirely, eating little or nothing before going to bed. This he did because his nervousness and his inner disturbances were growing more and more violent. Together with the inexplicable and groundless melancholy he began to be tortured by a certain indefinable yearning. His soul yearned for something without knowing what, though it seemed to him in a vague way that this something was of an erotic nature. There were moments when he felt in his heart as though he were in love. In his phantasy delicate feminine forms flitted about; and he moved his lips as though to kiss someone Yet he was positive that none of the neighborhood beauties had ever stirred his imagination.

One night about one o'clock he suddenly awoke from a vivid and clear dream. Immediately he sensed the changed atmosphere, but his whole being was pervaded with the sentiments and feelings that he had received in the dream. For a long time after awaking he thought he noticed a strange odor of carbolic acid. This he could not explain. His supplies were stored in the fifth room from his, and during the preceding day he had not used carbolic acid at all. And he could not clearly recall the presence of carbolic acid in his dream; though it did seem to him that the smell of it was a remembrance from the dream.

He had dreamed that he had entered a small, dark, immeasurably cold room. The walls were gray from humidity and were covered with long green spots. How he had come there he could not clearly recall; and the reason for his coming he was utterly unable to guess. He had to wait till his eyes grew accustomed to the darkness in the room. Then from a small round windowpane, up underneath the eaves, descended a wide beam of pale light. He could not say whether it was the light of the moon or of the sun. The beam fell on one side, illumining the furthermost part of the room. There on the stony pavement lay the body of a young girl. It was impossible for him to say whether she was dead or sleeping, or perhaps

just resting. Then he felt the eyes of the girl fixed upon him. Their gaze was so strange and unusual that he felt uncomfortable and depressed. Yet he could not turn away. Her large eyes were so beautiful and charming, with their calm, penetrating look and long shadowy eyelashes, which seemed covered with a delicate veil, that he could not turn his gaze away from them. The longer he looked the greater was his fascination. And then an immense desire to throw himself on the pavement and to bend down to the girl overcame him. Then something strange happened, something, however, that did not strike him as being strange at all in the dream. Another man came into the room. He looked at him and recognized himself. The newcomer was carrying a knife in his hand. He bent down to the girl and was about to make the customary anatomic incision with which a dissection begins.

"Stop! She is not dead. No! No!" he thundered at the intruder. "Tell me who you are and why you come here when I am here already!"

"You know that our calling is like that of a soldier. Our lives are not our own. I must do my duty."

"But stop! Tell me first, who is this girl? Just look at her! How beautiful she is! Oh, were I ever to love, she would certainly be my choice."

"Ha! Ha! Ha! Don't be a fool!" And then his other self told him rapidly the story of the girl; but the story was utterly incomprehensible to him. Then his other self started to sing an American song. Mišić remembered that he had heard the song once before, in the Anatomy Building in Vienna, from an American colleague who was humming it while dissecting a woman's hand and eating sweets.

"You know English?" he inquired, surprised. But his other self did not answer. Instead, he approached the girl again and lifted the robe that half covered her, and which bore stains of dried blood. Mišić became bewildered — such was the beauty of the body that he beheld! Never in his life had he gazed upon such exquisite loveliness. Only Canova's Psyche could be compared with those delicate, wondrously rounded and uniformly harmonious outlines. The finely shaped head with its luxuriant black hair rested on her left elbow, while her right hand lay on her virginal bosom, underneath her right breast. He could not resist all this magical beauty, despite the fact that he saw his other self suddenly covered all over with blood, as soon as he approached the girl. Now he was alone with the girl, he bent down to her and took her in his arms. He felt a piercing cold surging through his veins, but this did not prevent him from pressing her beautiful body closer to his heart. The girl now threw her arms around his neck and pressed her lips to his. He felt as though her ice-cold kisses were sucking his blood; yet he could not stop. He continued to return her kisses, which seemed to daze him. Suddenly he was no longer in the room. Still locked in her embrace he felt himself being transported somewhere over far-away, boundless waters, sinking deeper into the waves, which ap-

peared thick, yellowish and turbid as the sea when the South wind blows. Immense fright and piercing cold tortured him, yet he still held her in his embrace and returned her kisses. He longed to speak but could not articulate a single word; nor did she utter a syllable. At last he felt such cold that he thought he should freeze. Then he woke up.

The whole dream was stamped vividly on his memory, and he reënacted it mentally. More poignantly than ever he felt his usual spiritual uneasiness. Almost timidly he looked about the room. It lay before him silent and dark. The cabinets and chairs loomed in dim outline, mere round, black objects. Through the window curtains a narrow moonbeam found its way into the room, falling vertically on the center of the floor. The clock on the wall was invisible, but its slow, harsh ticking was audible. The alarm clock on the night cabinet near the bed was producing a loud, unpleasant noise. Mišić turned toward it. The phosphorescent hands and numerals showed that it was ten minutes past one. He turned toward the wall and fell asleep again. Shortly afterwards he woke up. He thought it was morning already — his slumber seemed so long! He looked at the clock. It was only sixteen minutes past one. In his dream the short minutes had seemed like ten hours. He had dreamed again of the same girl. But this time he saw her in the middle of some vast desert plain. She met him with the same rigid look; and as soon as he drew near her she embraced him with both arms, and then began to kiss or rather to suck him.

Against his will and yet with pleasure and delight he gave himself over to her kisses, which were still cold — cold as ice. And suddenly across the vast plain from all sides began to flow filthy puddle water, which surrounded him and the girl. Still he was not afraid, but continued to kiss her and caress her body, beautiful as that of Hebe. And it seemed to him that he was singing to her a mighty dithyramb in which he compared her beautiful form to lilies in a garden, to birds in a forest and to silvery fishes in water. And accompanied by his singing, the lilies, the birds and the fishes swam about her bosom, her neck and shoulders, her finely shaped elbows and her thighs, gliding through the water in luxuriant garlands. The array increased so greatly that an immense quantity of wreaths, of all sorts of prodigious creatures, surrounded both him and her, veering around them, making silvery waves back and forth. And from the scales of the fishes, from the feathers of the birds, from the petals of the flowers and from the waves emanated a peculiar bluish phosphosrescent light, which illumined the farthermost end of the train, where additional golden and red fishes were joining the procession, appearing as so many emeralds, topazes and rubies. "Venus Anadyomene!" he exulted triumphantly amidst the roaring waves, kissing her cold neck and pressing his breast to her bosom; while she, mute and motionless, clung round his neck and continued sucking him with her kisses rather than kissing him. Thereupon he found himself with her upon

a shell as large as a canoe, garlanded with cypress wreaths. Giant fishes and monsters of the deep were pulling the shell on and on, executing graceful voluptuous movements in the water as they proceeded. He did not care, did not ask where he was going. Hours and hours he sailed, always seeing before him imposing coral cliffs, fathomless depths, and beautiful water fauna, with species of flowers such as he had never seen; and all of these were illumined by a magic but melancholy light. Suddenly the shell changed into a wooden vessel. At first he could not tell what kind of a vessel it was, but later he divined that it was a coffin. A sweet, pleasing peace, and a feeling of happiness and indescribable comfort descended upon him, while her body, still more beautiful, still more charming, rested at his side. God knows how long that lasted. He had no means of measuring time, nor did he care to.

All at once the coffin hit a cliff, and, all alone, he fell deeper and deeper into the abyss. An inexplicable fear dominated him; and then he woke up.

He did not fall asleep till morning. He was greatly excited and irritated. At times the opinions expressed by Radičević and Batorić occurred to him. To be sure, he still had enough control over his intellect to resist their influence, yet he felt a certain uneasiness. It seemed to him that something was hovering in the air and then stealthily climbing the wall. He thought he could distinguish a very delicate fluttering, at times similar to the vibration of violin strings, at times to the dying chords of a far, far away song or music. And on all sides an invisible hammer seemed to be pounding upon some hard metallic object. The picture of the dream girl was even now floating before his eyes vividly and harmoniously, whether he kept them open or closed. He was still under the spell of her divine beauty. Oh, even now, in his waking moments, how clearly he remembered every line, every feature. Even now his hands move avidly to touch that perfect beauty.

"If I could only find such beauty in real life!" he exclaimed aloud several times. And the thought flashed through his head, why was he not a painter or a sculptor in order to present to the outside world that charming apparition.

Towards morning he fell asleep again. He slept quietly and soundly. It was ten o'clock when he awoke, and the room was filled with daylight. Although he had to go to work at once, since in the corridor and in the antechamber patients were waiting, he could not dismiss his dream from his thoughts. Somehow it perturbed him; and every moment he remembered how Radičević had explained it.

"Bah! What stupidity!" he would interrupt himself, only to recall and ponder upon Batorić's contention. He was acquainted to a certain extent with the philosophy of Schopenhauer, whose theory of dreams was not unknown to him. Of course he would not admit that Batorić was right, but no longer did he retain his former sovereign calm — the calm of the mod-

ern materialist. "After all, no one can tell!" he exclaimed involuntarily, as he wrote out a prescription for a villager who insisted that he was afflicted with some frightful disease.

Yet he still could not escape the picture of the dream girl. He had a number of women patients and he could not help making comparisons between their visible outlines and those that had appeared before him in his dream.

During the rest of the day the image of the beautiful dream creature kept coming back upon his memory. In the evening he did not go to pay his usual visits to his neighbors; instead he went into the garden to take a walk. He hoped that the fresh evening air would soothe and calm him; yet something made him yearn to be alone and to muse on the girl of his dream. The garden was vast and extended far into the hillside. Old fruit trees gave it in places the air of a forest. There were other trees also: tall lindens, birches, firs, and weeping willows; so that immediately after sunset the whole garden was inlaid with deep shadows. The narrow and grass-covered paths could hardly be distinguished. On one side of the garden stood a half-demolished gardener's cottage. From it extended a long but narrow vista of cornel and hazel wood, which led to an artificial hill where a Chinese pavilion lay in complete ruin. The Doctor moved absent-mindedly in that direction. In the gray twilight there loomed up in the distance the round, stupid outline of a Chinese head with a pointed hat, which was placed on the peak of the roof. Mišić could not repress a smile; he then went to the pavilion, from which he hoped to see a beautiful panorama. From there he could see the whole garden and part of the plain that extended toward the brook. It was now growing dark, and the country around presented a disagreeable aspect in the gloomy semi-gray darkness in which objects can still be clearly distinguished, though they lack the charm of the daylight. Here and there a swallow was flying; and bats and June beetles were gliding through the air. Crows and ravens gathered round the tops of the trees, preferring the tall poplars. In the deep, narrow moat, just beneath the pavilion, all covered up with needle-furze, thick weeds, and still thicker briers, something stirred, making a rustling noise. Mišić trembled despite himself, without thinking of anything definite. He was still excessively nervous. Sitting on a broken bench in the pavilion, he was driven to think of his dream and particularly of the girl whom he had beheld in it.

"If she were only alive — here — in the garden — before me — little Mignon!" he mused tenderly, recalling to his mind the charming little creature that Goethe's genius had created. He felt as though his dream girl were a similar mysterious being from some far-away land.

"But from where?" he asked himself audibly, at the same time convinced of the foolishness of the question. Still some strange and mystic power took possession of him, and instantly he believed in his heart that

his dream girl really lived, and that there was some connection between her and him. He gazed into the distance. Suddenly he thought he heard something stir and hover over the bushes, down in the remotest corner of the chasm. He grew rigid and he felt shudders running through his whole body.

"Oh, I must be ill. My nerves are completely shattered. It is because of them that all this nonsense is happening to me," he was saying to himself; and at the same time he fancied he saw a shadow flash by him — or what was it! He looked around. Everything was still, calm, in deathlike silence. Not a leaf on the nearby trees rustled. Only up above, far, far away in the air, a bird was flying leisurely toward the west; but because of the semi-darkness he could not recognize it. The Doctor left the pavilion in ill humor and distractedly descended the path of hazel and cornel wood. There everything was quiet and calm — only here and there some belated thrush or squirrel was arranging its bed among the thickly interwoven branches of the trees. In this stillness the doctor, despite his desire and his fixed purpose to think of nothing except his patients, again recalled to his mind the girl from his dream. And in a moment he fell into a reverie. He saw his beauty in various circumstances, romantic or commonplace, but always clearly and distinctly as he had done in his dream. There were moments when he saw not only parts of the phantom or a vaguely outlined whole, as is usual in reverie, but her entire body clearly outlined — all he had to do was to touch her with his finger tips. Then his heart was filled with tenderness. For a moment he gazed at the form of his imagination, if we may call it such, and then felt a great yearning to behold her alive, now, before him. He was dominated by an enthusiasm for the beauty that he beheld in his thoughts. Never had his æsthetic instinct been awakened and satisfied as it now was by this elusive phantom of his fancy. He admired her beautiful oval face and luxuriant, lusterless black tresses, her perfectly moulded shoulders and her delicate virginal bosom; and then her graceful waist with the charmingly curved lines from her back to her thighs, and then those marvelous limbs, so well rounded and yet so delicately fashioned. Oh, he was aflame, trembling with passion — forgetting that it was all merely his imagination, not reality.

Complete darkness had come on. No objects could be perceived in the woods. He turned back to the pavilion. As soon as he arrived there his former fear returned. Timidly he looked around him several times. The immense stillness of the evening grew more and more intense about him. All around reigned a most profound silence. Not even a cricket in the grass could be heard chirping. The doctor could almost hear the beating of the blood in his temples.

All at once he thought he heard a whisper or a hiss behind him. He turned around, but could see nothing. The moon had just risen above the

forest and a faint beam illumined the pavilion and its Chinese head, the face of which seemed to radiate mockery and malice. In a moment the moonlight spread over everything. The sky was no longer gray, but dark blue, with only a few stars twinkling. Near the moon floated a dark round cloud. The edge which was nearer the moon seemed aflame with a brilliant golden fire. The Doctor glanced at the cloud and then relapsed into his musing. He was awakened by a louder hissing or whispering. He was convinced that he had heard his name spoken. He jumped from the bench; and his eyes rested on the ravine near the moat. Unquestionably he could see some object down there. He thought it was the same apparition that he had seen in his dream. It seemed to him that she was motioning to him with her hand. Her face he could not clearly distinguish, yet he thought that it was sad and unhappy and that she was invoking his aid.

He stepped forward, but immediately regained his senses. "Oh, I must be insane. It is my accursed nerves again!" he moaned desperately, clasping his burning forehead with both his hands. He could feel the blood surging through his veins.

With hasty steps he left the pavilion, but ashamed of himself he turned toward the moat. Across the tall, dewy grass he descended to the place where he had seen the apparition. A frog leaped from beneath his feet. He started. When he arrived there everything was as usual. A lilac in full bloom, flooded with the moonlight, solved the riddle of the apparition.

"So that's what it was!" he cried triumphantly. And then and there he decided to take a cold shower before going to bed that night.

That night he did not dream. He slept soundly. When he woke up in the morning the sun was high in the heavens. His usual melancholy had also disappeared.

"Eureka!" he exulted, ascribing his success to the cold shower. Immediately he decided to adopt that mode of treatment. "I was right. Everything was due to my shattered nerves!" But after dinner he was actually depressed because he had not dreamed of the beautiful girl. A pleasing and irresistible wish to see her — were it only in his dreams — took possession of his soul. When he realized that if his dreams ceased her image would disappear forever from his heart, he felt as if he had lost a very dear friend.

Eight days passed and the dream did not recur. The doctor almost regretted the fact. He had not ascribed to the dream any fatal significance, anyhow, and his desire to see the lovely girl again was overwhelming. If he could only see such marvelous perfection once more! Until now he had told no one of his dreams. Some force that he himself could not have explained, restrained him. When he thought that everything was over, he related the whole dream to a group of people at a supper party given by Batorić in Brezovica. Enthusiastically he described the beauty of the dream girl.

"*Fine finaliter*," he jokingly imitated the mode of conversation of his neighbors, "there are qualities of a painter or a sculptor hidden in me. And yet, behold, I am only a doctor! Really I have missed my true calling," concluded the Doctor in a jocular tone.

Magnificus Radičević only shook his head and requested that the Doctor repeat the incident of the garden.

"But I am telling you, it was only my nerves. All that sort of thing comes from excitability," explained Mišić.

"Yes, yes, you are right," interrupted illustrissimus Batorić. "I should say that the incident in the garden was due to your nerves; but your dream was an entirely different matter. You know the verses of our old Horace, *Post mediam noctem, cum somnia vera*. And do not forget that the old Latins were a brainy lot, and that they always hit upon the truth. *Ad proposita*, they had a wonderful book. A certain Artemidorus wrote it and called it, I believe, *Ankirokritikon*. As a young man once I had it in my hands. It belonged to my godfather, the old Count Keglević. If you could get hold of it, clarissime, and read it, perhaps it would give you the key to your dream."

The Doctor only smiled; and throughout the supper he kept to his strict diet, despite numerous temptations to violate it.

A few nights later he dreamed the same dream. Again he saw the same beautiful body of the girl. This time he dreamed that he was still a student at the University of Vienna, and in the Anatomy Building. The attendant told him that he had a whole corpse at his disposal; and added that it was through his, the attendant's, good offices that the body was obtained; and that consequently he deserved a tip, as the other students were envious of Mišić's good luck. "Watch out, Doctor, that something doesn't happen to you. You might lose your head over her, she is so beautiful," the attendant said to him. When he stepped to the dissecting board, he saw her entirely naked. He recognized her, but could not remember where he had seen her. Enchanted by her beauty, it was long before he could bring himself to use his knife. He felt distressed at the prospect of cutting out of so perfect a form the breast which was to afford him material for his chapter on anatomy. He could not see his way clear to proceed.

He suddenly became unable to move. His hands and feet seemed petrified. His eyes bulged out; and then everything went blank. From an awesome distance he heard certain Latin conversations of which he could understand neither the content nor the purpose. He knew only that it was Latin and that it tortured and pained him seriously. In one word, he was terrified. Affrighted, he woke up. He looked at the phosphorescent clock. It indicated ten minutes past one.

"*Post mediam noctem, cum somnia vera*," were his first horrified words. And again he felt the usual melancholy and uneasiness.

"To see her in such a terrible condition! my little beauty!" he whis-

pered almost sorrowfully. "And really may there not be something behind all this? What does this incessant renewal of the same apparition mean? Finally, why does the situation always develop in the same fashion? Why is it that my feelings are wrought up to so high a pitch by a mere apparition in a dream — by a mere phantom of my imagination? Is it not strange that a creature of my fancy should enchant me far more than a real woman ever has done?" the Doctor asked himself. He did not wish to invoke the aid of his intellect or of the postulates of his science. Instead, with an absorbed delight, he gave himself over to these meditations, deriving a great joy from fancying that the marvelous girl was not an ephemeral creation of his imagination, but a real being, no matter of what sort.

"But why do I always dream of her in such horrifying circumstances?" he would interrupt himself in his leisurely meditations. And in his heart there would settle a chill like that of a serpent; and he would relapse into his melancholy attitude.

From that night on, his dreadful dreams recurred frequently, and he always saw the same girl, and always in some frightful situation. And after every such dream he would wake up terribly frightened. If he slept through without waking up, the morning would still bring him the usual melancholy and oppressive feeling, and he would have a premonition of something terrible.

But besides these gruesome dreams he had still more frequently erotic dreams, in which he always had to deal with the fair girlish phantom. He had numberless trysts in unknown places, and these trysts were filled with such extraordinary dramatic incidents as he had never — so far as he knew — experienced in real life. Scenes occurred in which most ardent declarations of love took place; and again others in which torturing jealousy held sway. Frequently he saw himself in a dual rôle. And his two selves clashed in jealous encounters. But the girl he always beheld in her perfect beauty, always veiled with the poesy of sadness and misfortune.

These dreams became so dear to him that he truly yearned for them. In order to insure her appearance during the night, he would force himself in the evening to think of her as intensely as possible. But presently he noticed that just at those times when he had mused on the phantom especially long and earnestly he would not dream of her. He never discussed his dreams with any one. He even sought to avoid such discussions. Whenever Radičević or Batorić asked him any questions concerning his experiences he would merely shake his head or smile and at once divert the conversation into some other channel. He himself did not know what to think of the whole affair. He ardently desired, however, that the image of the girl should forever remain fixed in his memory. As a boy he had studied drawing and he now attempted to draw the figure of his apparition, but after a quarter of an hour he had to throw away his pencil. He contrived an-

other means. He started a diary, and in it he accurately noted every dream.

One evening, exhausted by the hard work of the day, he went to bed a trifle earlier than usual. Outside a storm was brewing. It was thundering in the distance and the moonlit sky was covered with black clouds. Here and there a jagged thunderbolt flashed. The Doctor, thinking of his nervousness and fearing that the thunder and lightning might interfere with his sleep, got up, lowered the Venetian blinds and closed the shutters.

It was not long before he fell asleep. He dreamed that he was sleeping there in his bed, from which he could barely distinguish the objects in the dark room, and see through the narrow slits of the shutters the bluish flashing of lightning. His man-servant entered the neighboring room with a half-burned candle in his hand. He saw him open the cupboard and remove from it a bottle of his finest cognac, tuck it under his arm, and then tiptoe out of the room. The Doctor, still in his bed, saw him in the corridor, then on the ground floor, and then entering his own room, where a group of men and women were waiting for him. Mišić did not care to follow the servant any longer, nor did he marvel in the least at his ability to see everything from his bed. His glance now wandered outside, and he saw rain pouring down heavily. There on the street he saw a carriage — perhaps a farmer's — going at a dizzy pace. He could see still farther, much farther, God knows how far. Then he saw on a wide public road a lonely structure, which was low but long. Immediately he guessed that it was a tavern. In front of the house stood a crowd of men who looked like carters; and inside a large smoky room was filled with carters, farmers, and nondescripts. A corpulent tavern keeper and his thin wife, who was as dirty as the maid, a young Carinthian girl, were making their way among the customers, continually passing wine, cigars, and whiskey. In the corner, near the stove, sat a lone man, stooping over. He wore a long overcoat that reached to the ground. The raiment was so worn out that it was impossible to tell its original color. On his knees rested a violin. His long curly hair fell over his dark, wearied, and weatherbeaten face, which was of an unusual sallow color. His wretched face was overgrown with a long black beard; and as his head was bowed deeply, his unkempt beard fell half-way down his breast. Upon someone's motioning or calling to him, he adjusted the violin, stood up, and began to play. Long, sorrowful chords swelled through the room and then gradually, with a gentle, moaning tremolo, died away amid the uproar of drunken voices. The musician now turned toward someone and motioned sadly with his head. Then from somewhere — from behind a cabinet in the corner, it seemed — appeared a young girl in a short pink circus dress with blue ribbons. She placed herself near the fiddler, with her face turned toward him, and began to sing. It was a beautifully soft, divine voice. It started gently, very gently, then with a mighty crescendo swelled into an enchanting melody of now deli-

cate, now strong notes, and finally in a profound sigh died away with magic sweetness.

Dr. Mišić understood neither the words nor the song, nor did he recognize the melody; he only knew that he was listening to something that he had never heard before, so beautiful, so majestic, so perfect was her singing. He could not see the face of the singer. But when, toward the end of the song, the drunken rabble began to clamor and shout that they did not want any of those sad, goody-goody songs, but that instead the "gipsy" should sing a gay song, one of "ours," the girl turned toward the "audience." Her oval face almost morbidly pale, her large dark eyes, her luxuriant black tresses, her delicate swan-like neck, her whole being, assured him that she was the stranger from his dreams. He was dreadfully depressed and sad because he could not get up from his bed. Ah! she appeared far more beautiful now than ever before! Even now her face was veiled with a sort of inexplicable sadness and her eyes had a certain melancholy look; but from her whole being emanated fresh youthfulness. Ah! she was so charming, so wonderful in her timid, frightened, almost child-like attitude, with her soft smiles and the bewildered look in her tearful eyes, shaded with their long eyelashes! Again she sang, and again her song thrilled with a sad resonance still more heartrending than before. While she sang silence reigned everywhere. The most drunken drivers propped their unsteady heads with their elbows and listened with open mouths. Others, who were still able to stand on their feet, stepped nearer and encircled the singer, gazed stupidly at her, and despite their befogged brains, nodded in approval and dried their tears. When the last notes had ceased to vibrate, a voice rose in the opposite corner: "Hey, I don't want any more of those wailing songs; they give me a pain in my breast, my throat. Sing us something jolly, witch!" And a huge tramp jumped from his seat like a mad lynx, breaking all the glasses around him, and staggered drunkenly toward the musician.

"Sing us something jolly!" echoed others, and like a ball they rolled toward the wretched fiddler.

"Lay off, you filthy dogs! Let her be! Let her sing as she has been singing! It is beautiful! What do you want here anyway! Sing on!" protested those who had gathered around the singer.

"No, no!" and it became pandemonium as fists swung furiously. The poor fiddler's violin was smashed to pieces. Dejectedly he seized the girl by the arm and made for the door. At that moment a bottle whizzed through the air and hit the girl right on her temple. She fell down, a crumpled mass, without uttering a single sound. Dr. Mišić, terrified, emitted a piercing cry — and then awoke.

He was so excited that he could not close his eyes again. — "Whence these terrible, strange pictures?" he asked himself frantically, suspecting that they might be the first symptoms of insanity. "And how clear it all

was, how vivid and distinctly outlined, just like an experience of real life. This time there was not a single fantastic motif. An absolute fact! I can hardly believe that it was only a dream. It was as though I were viewing a scene from real life! Something serious is the matter with me. I shall have to go to Vienna, for observation by the professors. Oh, it would be horrible if I were to go insane!"

And he fell into a black despair. He decided firmly not to indulge in any fanciful meditations about the bewitching beauty of the girl. "Such meditations cause my dreams; these with their deceitful reality go quite beyond the true nature of dreams and are manifestations of a deranged spirit. Ugh! . . . . . ." He could lie in bed no longer. He got up and paced nervously up and down the room in his night-shirt. Then obeying a mysterious impulse he went into the neighboring room and opened the cupboard. His glance fell upon the cognac shelf. He was absolutely astounded and had to draw back a step or two. The very bottle of which he had dreamed had disappeared. The first thing he did was to walk towards the servant's room; he did not mind the theft, but he wanted to get to the bottom of this affair. From the corridor he could hear the drunken song that issued from the servants' quarters on the ground floor. He had dreamed of that, too. A feeling of amazement descended upon him. Almost frightened, he went downstairs. On the first step it occurred to him: "Oh, I heard the drunken song through my sleep, and that is how my dream created the picture that I saw!" And he slapped his forehead, smiled reassuringly and returned to his room. "Ultimately, or rather *fine finaliter*, chances are that I shall become another magnificus Škender."

Passing the cupboard he remembered the cognac. "Oh, that's a mere trifle, — just a coincidence. Perhaps I noticed yesterday that the bottle wasn't there and then never gave it another thought till I saw the scene in my dream."

He then went to bed, calmed.

The next day at noon, just as he was finishing his work in the office, a messenger came from the district court. He bore an official summons ordering the doctor to appear at the courthouse to join a commission of experts that was to investigate a case of murder that had occurred somewhere in a distant town on the boundary of the district. Ordinarily the Doctor would have received such a summons with indifference. This time, however, he immediately thought of his dream. "There was some truth in it," he whispered as he perused the document. But immediately he called himself a fool. "With my excitability I am growing almost childish." And he really was excited. The dream, a sleepless night, and his tense condition, which had existed for a whole week, all contributed to make him more nervous than usual.

His hands fairly trembled as he was packing in his case the instruments

necessary for a dissection. Three times he had to return from his carriage to the office to get things that he had forgotten and that were indispensable.

When he reached the courthouse the commission was gone. The judge, with a clerk and an older doctor, had left early in order to reach the morgue as soon as possible. Word had been left for him to follow them.

It was a hot August afternoon. All along the road the carriage raised veritable clouds of thick, yellowish dust. The air was heavy and oppressive and prevented free breathing. Mišić was impatient to reach his destination and to escape the inconveniences of the drive; and yet whenever he thought of arriving there, an inexplicable fear and terror took possession of him. He was utterly unable to explain his state of mind. But the strange similarity between his dream and the case upon which he was called to officiate constantly preyed upon his subconsciousness.

"After all . . . . .; oh . . . . . who could believe it for a single moment! Nothing! Nothing! At any rate such things are dangerous — they trouble our brains. One thing only is clear to me — a man can never escape superstition!" the Doctor reflected, attempting to drive away his thoughts.

The ride lasted about two hours. The town constable who awaited the Doctor's arrival took him to the morgue in the cemetery, where the investigating commission was already at work. There he found a great many people gathered round the table that stood outside the morgue. At the table sat a clerk who was taking down the testimony of witnesses. The Doctor threw only a hurried glance at the crowd. Strangely enough it seemed to him that all the faces there were familiar to him. However, he did not have time to ponder over that. The judge stepped up to him immediately and, indicating the door of the morgue, asked him to perform the autopsy while he was examining the witnesses.

"Murder — a gipsy murdered. Go ahead, Doctor, and finish up everything; then you can dictate your report. Let's not waste too much time. You, as the junior Doctor, will do the dissecting. Isn't that so, my dear Dr. Aschbayer?"

"Quite so, quite so. My respected colleague may proceed," retorted the senior Doctor, a man of advanced years and extraordinary obesity. "I've had plenty of that sort of thing. And I have a headache — I could not stand it inside. I will sign everything you wish. In the meanwhile I am going to the village to see if I can find a glass of good wine. — Undoubtedly, colleague, you can do everything necessary without my aid. Anyhow, it is a very clear case — a fatal blow on the left temple, I think; and the skull is broken above the ear. Yes, yes, a clear case. Then . . . I'll see you again! I shall return before you've finished the dissecting. Your Honor has nothing against my departure!"

And the old Doctor rolled out of the crowd, and with his goose step descended to the village.

Dr. Mišić prepared his instruments, ordered water to be brought to the

morgue and, accompanied by the constable and the sexton, went inside. The beam of light that entered through a small window above the door dimly illumined the scene. The place was narrow, and the walls were black and green from humidity. The air inside was musty. There was a slightly perceptible odor of a corpse. In the center stood a crude, clumsy table; and on it lay a body which was covered with a long soiled robe in such a way that no part of it could be seen — only a pair of dusty and much-worn shoes protruded from the lower end. The upper end of the robe, near the head, was bloodstained.

Dr. Mišić felt his usual composure deserting him. Continually his dream of last night kept coming back to his mind; and now, seeing the morgue and the bloodstains, he recalled his other dreams also.

"If under this robe lay . . . she! Oh, that would be too horrible!" he said to himself, suffering more from the thought that she was dead than from the presentiment that his dream was true. His feelings were like those of a lover who fears for the life of his belovèd. On similar occasions he himself would have undertaken to undress the corpse, for he was anxious not to let the awkward hands of untrained villagers touch the rigid limbs of the dead body. Now was he either unwilling or unable to follow his customary procedure. Instead he ordered the sexton to do the undressing. For his own part he turned toward the door, looked outside, and listened to the questions of the judge and the answers of the witnesses.

"I could not tell exactly how many of us there were; no one could. Yes, the room was filled with people," answered a voice. "All of a sudden a noise and a cry arose and the young people began to fight. Who can tell how and why! The devil himself seemed to be mixed up in it. The crowd was drunk; and it would be impossible to tell who struck the blow. I did not — I could swear it on the Crucifix — I never touched anybody — I did not."

"Oh — Oh!" wailed a shrill voice on the side, "you all are guilty. Oh God! to kill such a child! They've taken away my only support. Oh, wretched old me! Where shall I turn now? Please, please, illustrious, merciful court, arrest all of them; and make them pay me, pay me plenty. My poor, hapless child! They killed her as they would a cat. Oh! They broke my violin, too — my old Italian violin! No concert player ever had a better one!"

The voice somehow sounded familiar to Mišić, and he wanted to go out and see the wailing old man; but something held him back and he remained in his place.

"We have finished," announced the sexton and the constable behind his back. The Doctor started, and avoiding any glance at the table, withdrew from the door and bent over his instrument case. Outside, the wailing of the old man grew louder and louder. Although there was nothing to select, the Doctor remained bent over for a long time, picking and choosing among the knives, scissors and lancets.

"Daylight won't last forever," remarked the sexton, to remind the Doctor that it was about time to start.

Mišić bent over with a sigh, then with a supreme effort he stepped to the table, still forbearing to look in the direction of the corpse.

"Bah! What stupid thoughts are entering my mind! I am not Radičević!" he mumbled angrily, drawing very close to the table.

"Yes, it is . . . it is she!" he ejaculated almost aloud, drawing back two paces. His arms fell to his sides, and his right hand clasped the blade of the knife, so that he felt a twinge of pain. On the table lay the body of a beautiful young girl. Her soft and delicate face, wearing a frightened and suffering expression, seemed to gaze at the doctor, and her large dark eyes were wide open. On her long eyelashes and thick brows some dust had gathered. Her black luxuriant tresses fell in disorder over the table to the floor. Above her left ear a quantity of dried blood had transformed one lock into a hard ball.

"No, no, it cannot be she!" the Doctor stammered to himself, after a long pause. "It must be a hallucination, as it was in the garden when I took a blossoming lilac for a girl. My nerves, my nerves!" and he grasped his forehead.

But the longer he gazed the surer he was that the body was identical with the one that he had seen in his dreams.

"There is no doubt — the same lines — the same face that I have seen so many times in my dreams. It is she. It is she!" he moaned pitiably and his heart was afflicted by a great pain and a boundless sorrow, and his eyes were moist with tears.

"It is she!" he whispered hoarsely, scarcely able to breathe, and gazing at her beautiful form, which was just slightly rigid and not yet entirely suffused with the paleness of death. He recognized every line. There was the same insignificant black scar above the right thigh. Even her right hand lay near her right breast, as he had seen it in the first dream. He trembled and felt a great fear. It seemed as though a fatal, mysterious cloud were hovering over him, enveloping him in the terrible shadow of the world beyond where human intelligence is powerless.

"Then dreams do not lie," he spoke aloud, without paying any attention to the two men present. "It is the same body, and in exactly the same circumstances as in my dream. And then the witness said that there was a scuffle. But no! All this may be a mere coincidence. Perhaps I do not see clearly. Sick nerves! I always dream the same apparition, and now I see it everywhere. But . . ." He interrupted himself and jumped feverishly toward the sexton, and asked him to describe the body. The sexton eyed him suspiciously, then distorted his mouth with a stupid laugh, turned toward the constable and scratched his head above his ear.

"But, can't you see her, doctor? Hm . . . She is beautiful. It's a pity she got killed. A mere child."

"But tell me what kind of hair she has! Is her body stout? Is it? . . . Speak up!"

"For God's sake, Doctor, she has black hair. And her body . . . how could I describe it? . . . She is young and beautiful. . . . She is not fat."

"Is there a scar above her thigh?"

"Yes, of course, there is. How can you doubt it? There, see it!"

"Then I saw all right!" the Doctor said to himself. "It is she. It is she!"

And he no longer thought of his dream. He merely gazed upon the beautiful body. He suddenly felt a need of being alone; and almost rudely he ordered the sexton and the constable to leave the room.

Now he directed a long, long glance upon the dead girl. The beauty of her graceful figure again rose before his eyes, as in his dreams. An enormous sorrow, a saintly pity, and a black despair filled his soul. "How beautiful, how wonderful she is! By her beauty she deserves naught but happiness. But now, alas, there she lies, a dead body! Why could not the fates have been kinder to her?" And in his mind he delved into the history of the poor vagabond songstress, whose destiny was not satisfied with her wretched life on the street, and with her continuous contact with poverty, sin, and grief, but had to punish her with so cruel and so early a death! The doctor trembled with horror. Then his erotic dreams arose in his memory. It seemed to him that they were real; and that like a lover he was standing before the corpse of his belovèd, bewailing her loss. He cursed Fate for playing such a cruel trick upon him. The girl had conquered his heart and soul, and yet in real life he was permitted to behold merely her dead body. An immense, tender affection pervaded his whole being, and he felt a desire to press his lips against those of the corpse. Fantastic thoughts flitted through his brain; and in a strange ecstasy he began to whisper to her that she belonged to him, that she was destined for him, and that his obstinate dreaming of her was not a mere trifle.

"Yes, yes, between our souls there existed a communion through which they overcame all physical obstacles and found each other. She is mine! She is mine!"

He bent down to her and kissed her cold lips. At first the unpleasant cold touch and the repelling odor terrified him. But after again beholding her magnificent and delicate beauty, his former ecstacy and affection returned, and he felt quite ashamed of himself for yielding even for a moment to a feeling of repulsion for his belovèd, though she was dead. And again he began to kiss the corpse but not only on her face; he showered with kisses her tresses, her neck, her bosom, and her hands. When he came to himself he started up and freed himself from the strange embrace. His soul was now possessed by a terrific, indescribable pain. The whole tragedy of that wasted young life, so beautiful and marvelous, as well as the still greater tragedy of his own heart and soul, became apparent to him. He wept bitterly. Profuse tears rolled down his face, which was distorted and quivering with pain.

It was a terrible, terrible moment for him!

"Well, doctor, have you started?" asked the judge from the entrance. "I've finished the chief part of my work."

And he began to recite the findings concerning the murder. It was the same act of which the doctor had dreamed. The judge was followed by the father of the murdered girl. The doctor could not help shivering again when he saw him. He was of almost exactly the same appearance as the musician of the dream.

"What is the matter with you, doctor? You look pale! You look . . ." remarked the judge upon seeing the changed and agitated appearance of the doctor.

"Nothing — nothing. — It is long since I have done any dissecting."

"If you feel ill, I will send for Dr. Aschbayer. He is old, it is true, but still if it is necessary he will have to perform the dissection."

"No, no!" exclaimed the doctor. The idea of someone else dissecting her body horrified him. "I must do it. — Let me perform at least this service for her," he said to himself, almost insanely.

The old musician in the meanwhile had slunk into a corner, where he continually groaned and cried. He was bewailing the loss of his child and his violin. The judge wanted to send him out, but he raised his hand and begged that he be allowed to remain inside. The doctor, however, would not agree; but requested that everybody leave the room, with the exception of the sexton, whom he needed to hold the vessel of water.

Now he was alone. With a great moral effort he attempted to be calm. And in fact he was quite steady while he removed his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and once more took hold of his instruments.

But, alas, the first incision across her forehead caused him frightful moral suffering. That fine soft forehead, that delicate face which had captivated him with its beauty and charm in those wondrously sweet dreams, he had now to destroy. And after he had cut the skin and was ready to saw off the cranium, he had to stop for a moment and go out for a breath of fresh air.

Despite all his efforts he was unable to conquer himself. His whole body was quivering from excitement, severe suffering, and sorrow. It was only his unusual skill as a surgeon that enabled him to continue the dissection. But when he was about to cut open her breast and abdomen his forces began to desert him, and the incision that he made was not the proper one. He was perspiring profusely all over his forehead and his body. He could hardly distinguish objects before him. After he had removed her heart he felt a terrific pain. A dizziness descended upon him. Then he reeled and fell helpless over the corpse, his arms crossed.

"For God's sake, doctor, be careful that you do not cut yourself," exclaimed the sexton, observing that the knife in the doctor's right hand had plunged into him somewhere under his left shoulder. The doctor did not

hear him. Dazed, almost senseless, he arose in a moment and continued his work unconsciously, almost mechanically.

Never in his life had it taken him so long to perform an autopsy. When he had finished he went out and called the clerk to take down his report. At first his voice shook slightly, but gradually he regained his self-control, and when Dr. Aschbayer arrived, Mišić was dictating in a firm and sure voice.

While signing the report a drop of blood suddenly fell on the paper from underneath his sleeve.

"What is that?" queried Dr. Aschbayer in surprise.

"I don't know," replied Mišić. "I washed myself well. I have no idea where the blood comes from."

"But, good God, is it possible that you have cut yourself? God, that would be terrible!"

"I do not remember having done so," answered Mišić, fairly alarmed.

"Yes you did — there — the blood is still dripping. Oh, good God Almighty, you have poisoned yourself!" and the old doctor quickly took off Mišić's coat and rolled up his shirt sleeve. On the left upper arm, quite near the shoulder, there appeared a slight cut of some length.

"Alas, how did it happen? — so high? It would be bad enough if it were on your hands, your fingers, but so high! How in thunder could you reach so high with your knife? It is almost impossible for one to cut himself there."

The sexton observed that he had seen the knife rip into the doctor's shoulder when he swooned and fell down.

"And you, man alive, you did not say anything? Fool — fool, don't you know that this is not an ordinary wound, but poison, death, unless there is immediate treatment! And it is almost two hours now since this happened," lamented Aschbayer.

Then he proceeded to search Mišić's case for materials used in rendering first aid on such occasions. But his search revealed the fact that there was no alcohol, or caustic, or nitric acid — in short that there was nothing. In his confusion at the time of leaving, Mišić had forgotten the small case in which he kept such things.

"God, what shall we do now?" cried the old man; while Mišić stood motionless, as if petrified. "And it is too late to suck the wound, too late!"

"Too late!" echoed Mišić, speaking in a hoarse and solemn voice, more to himself than to others. He felt as though he were under the influence of some mighty and absolute law which functioned mercilessly and against whose will there could be no struggle, no recourse. The meaning of his dream now dawned upon him.

"This is then what the rigid body, the coffin, the drowning in the frightful stream, and the bloodsucking kisses of the girl in my dream portended. Death was awaiting me — hence my melancholy. In my dream my soul

foresaw everything. It was fated to be!" Mišić whispered to himself without observing or caring what was happening about him. His whole being was pervaded by an immense apathy. He was convinced that the whole life of man, even in its most minute details, was nothing but an uninterrupted series of absolutely preordained events. Now he understood how his soul, weeks and weeks ahead of time, could presage what was going to happen. At this moment he felt and perceived its mystic nature. His mechanical and chemical understanding of the universe and of himself came to naught, and in his soul he felt that there was something else besides the mere physiological processes of the human brain. This new understanding was not a disappointment to him. On the contrary he felt bigger and stronger, and the thought of dying did not terrify him. He fell into a sort of mystic ecstasy which lifted his spirit and made him believe that death was not the end but the beginning of progress towards true perfection. And here he thought of the dead girl. A warm, ardent belief that he should see her again entered into his heart.

"We must hurry home," Dr. Aschbayer aroused him from his meditation. "From there we'll send immediately to Zagreb for doctors. The need is great — you know it best — what is the use concealing it. You know yourself what the poison of a corpse means. Your arm will have to be amputated at the shoulder. That's your only salvation."

"You think so? Hm . . . I don't know," retorted Mišić, thinking of his dream. But he made no further remarks. At home he made no objection to the sending of a carriage to Zagreb for a famous surgeon. He did not seem to care about anything.

That night he lapsed into a fever; his poisoned wound was inflamed. At first the inflammation had only reached the joint of the shoulder. But the next morning when the surgeon and his assistant arrived, the whole shoulder was inflamed. There was no doubt that his blood was poisoned. Amputation would have been purposeless now.

"Medical science is powerless here. Send for a priest. Telegraph his relatives," the surgeon said to Aschbayer; and after receiving his fee he hurried back to the city, where urgent cases were awaiting him.

Mišić passed from one fever into another. Very seldom did he regain consciousness. The pain increased with great speed and unabated fury. He was delirious. And in his fevered mind he was carrying on a happy love affair with the hapless girl. He lived through days, months, years, of an idyllic love. Nay, it was a veritable eternity that he lived through during a few short hours.

When the physical end approached, he regained consciousness. A bright summer sun was flooding the room. Near the bed sat Dr. Aschbayer and old Batorić.

"Truly I am not sorry to go," continued the doomed man. He told the truth. He felt elated and far, far away from everything that surrounded

him. He was unable to understand how it was possible for him to have any love for his recent life or to see any sense in it. So strange, so distant and indifferent was everything worldly to him now. Not even the golden sunbeams moved him, nor did he for a moment regret that in a short time he should be deprived of their brilliancy forever.

Suddenly his mind became unusually clear. Every thought that came to him appeared clear and exact, without any ambiguity and doubt. And his thoughts flowed with a rapidity in comparison with which electricity is nothing. Almost all his knowledge passed before his mind with such accuracy, clearness, and completeness as never before. He remembered long-forgotten things from his primary school, every page of the books he had studied — as if he were studying them now. Then he felt a strange change in his inner being. His whole life from his early childhood was now revealed to him. The most insignificant things, trifles, the playthings of his childhood, senseless jokes, and incidents — all passed before him. And it was not as though he were forming pictures, visualizing the incidents — it seemed to him that he was living his past life all over again. He was unaware of any physical measure of time and space and he saw no difference between the realities of his past life and his fateful dream. That also was present to him and he viewed it with the same sensations. Then a sweet, resplendent enchantment took possession of his soul and the wondrous figure of the young girl stood before him.

"All things with which our souls commune are real for us. And now I am able to see that such things alone are truly ours. They do not leave us even at the time of our death!" he spoke aloud, interrupting his thoughts.

"Oh, how my blood burns!" He straightened himself in his anguish, wishing to change his position. But his strength failed him and his head sank into the pillow.

He was dead.

Czechoslovakia

INTRODUCTION

BEFORE the middle of the Nineteenth Century there is very little fiction to be found in Czech literature, though the history of that literature begins before the days of Bohemia's first great writer, John Huss, who was born about 1360.

Early in the last century the schoolmaster Josef Jungmann compiled a dictionary of the Czech language, and for several years persevered in the work of encouraging his people to make use of their own language and literary traditions, which had for political reasons, during two centuries, become almost extinct under the Austrian domination. Among the earliest writers to take advantage of Jungmann's work were Bozena Nemcova (1820–1862), and Karolina Svetla (1830–1899), women novelists; and Jan Neruda (1834–1891), novelist and short story writer. A little later came Ignat Herrmann, who was for a long time a commanding figure in Bohemian literature.

During the past half-century the Czechs have developed, in spite of their natural bias toward nationalism, several brilliant fiction writers, of whom the best-known are Cech, Winter, and Jirasek.

IGNAT HERRMANN

(1854–)

HERRMANN'S life reads, as one critic says, like an "American biography." He began as a baker's apprentice, and became in turn traveling salesman, law clerk, bank clerk, reporter, and newspaper editor.

His novels and stories are for the most part carefully observed and accurately described records of the life he knew at first-hand. Besides writing an imposing array of novels and a number of volumes of stories and tales, for over thirty years he edited a well-known humorous magazine.

The translation that follows was made by Marie Busch and Otto Pick, and is reprinted from *Select Czech Tales*, London, etc. [1925], by special arrangement with the Oxford University Press.

CHILDLESS

IVAN HRON had been married for ten years; he had a beautiful wife and was rich. Even his most intimate friends said, not without a touch of envy, that he had "a first-rate berth." They might indeed envy him, for Ivan Hron seemed a spoilt child of fortune. When he had left school, he had entered the university to study law, in order to take his degree. This he did chiefly because his father, a well-to-do tradesman in the country, wished it; he wanted his son to rise in the world. And the son did as his father wished and went to college. But he did not finish his university career. As a young hothead he had been mixed up in some political propaganda; the affair had at first earned him several weeks' arrest, then he was sent down. Although his indiscretion had been of a purely political character, the academic senate wished to keep the reputation of the university unstained, and parted for good with the ill-advised youth. This outcome of his folly had so roused his father's anger that he ordered him out of the house and disinherited him. These things will happen! For whom does a father work and worry from morning till night, if not for his children? What right had a foolish boy, dependent on his father, to spoil his whole future by one careless act?

That Ivan Hron had spoilt his, was his father's firm conviction, and he succeeded in convincing his mother too. With this conviction old Hron died.

And Ivan? When he was in these desperate straits, he knocked at the doors of a Great Bank where clerks were wanted. He obtained work, and dedicated his mind and body to the concern for the salary of thirty florins. It was not long before his superiors found out that he had not wasted his time at the public school where he had spent the greater part of his life, nor during the two years at the university when studying law. Evidently he had after all not entirely spoilt his future outlook. His immediate superiors recommended him to the higher authorities as an eminently "useful" young man, and Ivan Hron got preferment. But his humbler colleagues had no idea of the surprise which was in store for them when after a few years the general manager died. While the cashiers, head clerks, accountants, and other employees, formerly of a very superior rank to Hron's, remained at their desks or marble counters, Ivan, who had assisted very successfully in some important transactions, was unexpectedly called in at the board meeting, where the chairman proceeded to deliver an impressive address, full of oratorical flourishes which befitted the occasion, and asked him whether he would be willing to accept the vacant post.

"We have the greatest confidence in you," he concluded.

Although Ivan Hron was exceedingly astonished, he showed his surprise in no way. Up to a certain point he had confidence in his own ability, and presence of mind enough to answer that his acceptance would depend on their conditions.

"The conditions will be the same that held good for your predecessor," said the chairman of the board meeting, "and if you fulfil our expectations they will be better still. The state of our affairs entitles us to great hopes; we only need a firm, energetic director. That is why we have chosen you."

Ivan Hron accepted, and the evening papers carried the news that same day to all those who were interested in the appointment of the general manager.

"Lucky fellow!" some said. "They'll have a good head on their shoulders," said others.

A most promising future now lay before Ivan Hron. He remained unmarried for another year, as though to test the ground under his feet. And when he found it was firm, he got married.

Many people were surprised that he had chosen a wife without a fortune. They were still more surprised when they heard that she had been an heiress until lately, when with the failure of her father's business the glamour which surrounded her had suddenly been eclipsed. Why had he knocked at that door when his position made him worth thousands? Was he under an obligation to her? Had he wooed her earlier and was now going to redeem his promises as a man of honour should? When circumstances take such a turn as his had done, surely promises are no longer binding, and so-called honour in these cases was ridiculous, said the more experienced and worldly among his friends and acquaintances.

Nobody knew that this unpromising match had cost Ivan Hron a great deal of trouble and perseverance; that he looked upon the father's failure as a happy coincidence; that the girl had yielded to the urgent request of her parents to accept the hand which was offering her a safe future, and which might perhaps save the whole family from the greatest misery. And Ivan Hron had beamed with happiness although he had led his pale bride to the altar and out of the church in an almost fainting condition.

He had now been married ten years. He was a handsome man in the forties, and some of his former fellow-students, now elderly clerks in lawyers' offices, unbriefed barristers, or doctors who had failed in their final examinations, looked with envy on the former student who had not finished his university career because he had been sent down.

Many of them were married and had several children; their wives had aged before their time, and often there was hardly enough for the current household expenses. Ivan Hron meanwhile belonged to the "élite." He had his carriage, was rarely seen on foot; his wife was still a beautiful woman, his salary increased from year to year; he lived in his own handsome villa, travelled for six weeks in the year, and had no children.

No children! His friends did not know how painful this part of his good fortune was to Hron. For none of the successes and attainments of his life gave him the happiness which a wicker-basket with muslin curtains and the downy head of a rosy, beloved small creature asleep in it would have given him. In spite of all the glamour of his brilliant, exciting life, Hron did not get rid of the old-fashioned feeling that life is perfect only when it is blessed with children. What point, what aim was there in his whole successful career? Why had he worked himself up to the highest position which was open to him, why did he save, to whom would he leave his fortune when, old and frail, he would end his days? What would rejoice his heart in old age?

Moreover, in his case his disappointment was not one of the accidents of life; he did not count how many years he had been married to his beloved Magda and still they were alone. He had married on purpose to have a family, and therefore this unfulfilled desire hurt him all the more. He had been bred in the country and was untouched by the town-bred egoism which aims solely at enjoyment for its own sake, at an untroubled existence dedicated to the "Ego" and its wishes. He wanted children, and when he took his beloved bride home he looked forward to holding a little creature in his arms in course of time. Perhaps the full measure of his longing for a family was due to his having early been disowned by his own people on account of his youthful folly; he had never been received again under the paternal roof. He longed to fill up this void by his marriage to Magdalena. He watched her looks, almost spied upon her sighs at night, and trembled with impatience for the moment when she would blushingly confide to him her sweetest secret. But this moment

never came. She confided nothing; she went to and fro in their beautifully furnished home, and her face more and more distinctly took on a sad, almost pained expression; a line appeared which started from her prettily shaped nose and included her lips. This expression did not even quite vanish when she laughed heartily; and when she was not smiling, the wistful, sorrowful look quite gained the upper hand.

Was she too feeling what it was that made them miss being perfectly happy? Did she know what was passing in her husband's soul? How could she have failed to feel and to guess? No one is so absolutely the slave of his will at every moment, that not a word or a look should betray what is slumbering in the depth of his heart, or what it is for which he is hungering and thirsting. Ivan Hron was no exception to the rule. There was hardly a moment when Mrs. Hron did not guess her husband's wishes, if guessing indeed were necessary. Was she not a woman?

Hron would often invite friends to dinner or supper so as to have life in his empty, quiet rooms, and to see them a little untidy. There were times when he did not feel happy in the spotless surroundings of his home, where for months together everything stood in its appointed place, polished, and shining with neatness; where not a speck of dust was to be found, and the well-swept carpets hushed every footstep; where sounds of romping were never heard.

"You are living like a prince," said one of his guests; "how comfortable this house is, and how charmingly furnished."

"And what lovely works of art," added his visitor's wife, who did not get tired of looking again and again at the beautiful pictures and graceful statuettes, or of turning over the leaves of albums filled with photographs of towns and lovely places which Hron either alone or with his wife had visited. She looked at the antique furniture almost with a touch of envy.

"You do know how to arrange things," she sighed; "you are lucky."

Ivan Hron looked round at the things which had excited her envy, and looked almost bored. They had interested him chiefly at the time when he had bought them; it gave him pleasure to arrange them or put them up on the walls, but after that he got accustomed to them, seeing them every day, and in the end he hardly noticed them. He said without a note of pleasure in his voice, and thinking of the rotund figure of the little woman:

"The rooms are pretty enough, but they are too quiet. I wish there were more of us."

He glanced furtively at his wife who had ceased to smile; he even thought that it was all that Magdalena could do to suppress the tears which were rising to her eyes.

Another time they themselves were on a visit to friends who had three small children; the youngest was a charming, curly boy. They were entertaining them with singing, music, and animated conversation, but none of these things seemed to interest Hron. He devoted himself entirely to the

little rascal in his high chair; he took him on his knee, allowed him to pull his nose and beard, chased him again and again under the table and caught him up to begin afresh.

Mrs. Hron kept up the appearance of conversation with her hosts, but she was casting perpetual side-glances at her husband's game with the boy, and her eyes betrayed the pain which was wringing her heart. This one gift to him was denied her! How happy she would be if the laughter of children were to echo through their own house, if Ivan could chase a barefooted little fellow of his own!

In the middle of the game Hron suddenly lifted his head and caught one of these glances; he understood what was passing in her mind and left the boy alone. His absorption in the strange child must look like a reproach, and he did not reproach her, he loved her far too much for that. Had they a right, moreover, to reproach each other? Did any one in the world know whose fault it was that they had remained alone? Once he had taken refuge from his secret disappointment in a visit to a doctor, and confided in him. Was there a remedy? What could be done? Whose fault was this misfortune? No, not fault, he corrected himself; there was no fault, no failing . . . but the cause, the cause?

That was difficult to say. Sometimes it was the husband, sometimes the wife — a physiological problem, inexplicable. Perhaps incompatibility, two natures which do not meet; there was no explanation, no help.

Then Ivan Hron began to brood. He thought over his past life; he was healthy, without a blemish or taint. He must be unsuitably mated then? Perhaps he had been too hasty about the whole affair.

How many times had he seen his wife before their marriage? Two or three times; first in Dresden on a holiday. He had noticed a gentleman and a charming girl who were talking to each other in Czech. He concluded that they must be his countrymen, probably also on a holiday. He had seen her, heard her talking Czech, and fallen in love with her. He had introduced himself and followed them like a shadow for two days; then they had gone home. Soon afterwards he also left; he took no further pleasure in his surroundings. He had learned that the gentleman was a manufacturer from one of the larger towns in Bohemia, the girl was his daughter. After a little while he purposely visited their town and ventured to call on the family. He was received with civility — no more. The girl was a distinguished personality, but she was very cold. Her eyes had plainly shown him her astonishment when he presented himself: "Does our accidental meeting in Dresden give you the right to follow me to the bosom of my family?" they seemed to say.

He went away, and a week later boldly asked for her hand. He wrote to her and to her father at the same time. The father's letter was very polite; he evaded the disagreeable duty of a direct answer by the promise that his daughter herself should send the decision.

She had decided. Graciously but firmly she rejected his proposal.

"Well, that's finished," Hron said to himself, "now I must leave it alone. I suppose I am not important enough for her."

But then the unexpected thing had happened: he saw from the newspapers six months later that her father's business had failed.

This news produced a strange sensation in Ivan Hron. He could have shouted for joy. How would his chances stand now? He returned to the town where they lived to repeat his offer personally.

How embarrassed they had been when he appeared; almost as if they were ashamed of themselves! Hron told them as tactfully as possible that his position would assure their daughter a life free of cares, and all the comforts she had been used to in her own home.

The girl had seemed almost in despair. This time her father spoke for her. He did not refuse Hron's offer, but asked for a respite: "Wait a month or two . . . or perhaps six months; have patience," he said. "You do not know how much we all have suffered; everything is changed. And we have to see to many things. I know you are a generous man, you have proved it by returning now that we are in trouble. It is not every man who thinks as you do."

Ivan Hron did wait for a whole six months; after that he wrote again, urgently, almost imploringly. It was not the general manager of an important banking combine who spoke in these letters, but a young enthusiast. And Magda became his own. Her father wrote to him that she consented. Then Hron had married her.

Later on he often thought of all this, and of the strange circumstances with which his suit and marriage had been attended. Had not fate in the first instance pointed out his way? Ought he not to have buried his hopes after that first refusal? Perhaps he would have found a girl equally beautiful, gentle and distinguished who would have made him wholly happy. . . .

He was always seized with a feeling of unspeakable sorrow when he arrived at this thought. Had Magda unconsciously had premonitions which had made her stand out against the marriage? Did she guess that she would never make her husband entirely happy? Was it a conviction that she would remain childless?

Then it would be she who was at fault!

Ivan Hron was almost maddened by his pondering and brooding at times. But tenderest compassion and deep pain filled his heart when, sometimes, late at night after having finished some important piece of work, he entered their bedroom on tiptoe. Before opening the door he would listen whether he could hear her sobbing. Then he would wait for hours until the spasm subsided, creep to his bed like a thief, relieved when he heard her breathing quietly, and in the morning when he waked her with a kiss, express in it his whole love and tenderness. And when

his wife returned his embrace so warmly and gratefully, she seemed to be asking his forgiveness. When he looked at her as she went about her occupations and duties during the day with care and thoughtfulness, he fell in love with her afresh, and kissed her as on that first day when he had taken her to their new home. Therefore the constant recurrence of the thought: "How much happier we might be if there were yet another being to care for . . ." was all the more painful to him.

One beautiful afternoon in the summer Ivan returned home earlier than usual from his office. As he had his own latchkey he had no need to ring the bell, and entered unobserved. He put his hat and stick down in his study, and went towards his wife's room. He did not hear his own step on the thick carpet. . . . Magda had not heard it either.

She hardly had time between the moment of his opening the door and coming up to her, to fold up a letter which she had been reading, and slip it into the envelope. She did it quietly, and Hron did not notice that her hands were trembling. When he was by her side, she leant her left hand with the letter in it on the table, and smoothed down something in her dress with the right hand, thus keeping both her hands occupied. He could not have failed to feel them trembling if he had touched them.

"You've had a letter?" asked Ivan, pointing to the envelope which peeped out from beneath her fingers; he bent down to kiss her.

Every drop of blood ebbed from her face when her lips met those of her husband; her half-extinguished "Yes" was lost in her kiss.

"From home?" he continued, looking at the stamp, "what news?"

Involuntarily he stretched out his hand for the letter. At that moment Mrs. Hron felt as though she must run away or throw herself out of the window, . . . but if she would avoid a catastrophe she must do nothing to rouse his suspicion. Her fingers painfully unclasped, but leant the more heavily on the table.

Hron took up the letter.

"That looks like a weekly review," he said good-humouredly, feeling it with his fingers, "have you read it?" He half pulled the letter from the envelope, and recognized his mother-in-law's handwriting.

"Not quite," answered the young woman. She tried to speak as audibly as she could, but her voice failed her, and her husband began to open the sheets which enclosed another sheet of paper.

"Well, the volumes you write to them are not much shorter," he said kindly, and looked at her before he quite unfolded the letter.

She was standing upright, looking upon his hands with fear in her eyes, and was as white as chalk. Her fixed eyes did not take in her husband's astonishment.

Ivan Hron did not understand; but he thought he did. He suddenly remembered that she never touched his letters, however long they might

have been lying on his writing-table: that she never even read a postcard addressed to him; she never showed the least curiosity about his correspondence. He had returned this reticence with regard to her letters. He never touched them without first asking: "May I?" To-day he had failed to do this . . . she had not even finished reading the letter . . . he had broken the custom which had become a tacit understanding between them. That must be the cause of her astonishment and consternation. Therefore Ivan Hron folded the sheet up again, put it back into the envelope which he laid down on the table, and said in a conciliatory tone; "Forgive me, Magda, that was not right."

His wife forced herself to a gentle smile to conceal her terror, and it was a little while before she was able to say: "You know it is from our people, nothing of importance, nothing new."

She at once turned the conversation: "You are early to-day; has anything happened?"

"What should have happened?" said her husband, "I hurried home because I hoped we might get a walk. It is such lovely weather. If you feel inclined, we might go to the Sophia Island. Will you get ready?"

Whistling softly to himself, he went to his room to wash his hands and put on fresh cuffs.

When he had gone, his wife opened a drawer of her bureau which contained her most precious and valuable possessions, took out a small box of cedarwood, locked the letter up in it, put the key in her pocket and went out to dress.

They went down the staircase together and out into the street, where Hron offered his arm to his wife. He was delighted to feel how firmly she put her hand on his arm and pressed close to him. Yes, this arm was her hold and firm protection in this world!

Ivan Hron had no idea of what was passing in her mind.

A few days after this incident, which had passed entirely from Hron's memory, he was left alone in the house. He was planning his annual holiday outside Bohemia with his wife, and according to their custom Magda always went home to her parents for a few days first. They were now old, and she wished to see them and have the satisfaction of having been with them once more.

In her absence Ivan made preparations for their departure. His leave had begun already, and he spent his days at home. He locked up things that were to be left behind, and put everything in order. The next day Mrs. Hron was to return from her native town.

Ivan Hron came home from his dinner at a restaurant, and began to pack his handbag. Then he went though all the rooms to see whether he had forgotten anything. He went into his wife's room, and smiled, noticing the order and neatness of everything.

Suddenly his eye was caught by her walnut bureau. All the drawers were locked except the top one which had been pushed back hastily.

"Just fancy, all her treasures unlocked," he thought: "the room is not locked either; the servant might have put her nose into everything."

Involuntarily and without a set purpose, he took hold of the two ornamental bronze rings and pulled out the drawer.

In it were books, jewelry, embroideries, photographs, and keepsakes. A box of cedar-wood was in the right-hand corner. He knew it; he himself had given it her as a Christmas or New Year's present, when she had expressed a wish for a box in which to keep various trifles.

Hron touched the little box, and noticed that the key of wrought iron was in it.

"Careless little woman! The drawer open and the key in her box! And what about all those sacred secrets, those valueless, and yet so carefully guarded mysteries?"

It suddenly struck him, although he did not feel the ordinary human curiosity: "I wonder what they are, these things that my dear Magda has collected in this box?"

He almost smiled at the thought that perhaps his first letter was among them, the one which she had answered with a refusal? As though this thought had with lightning-speed been transferred to his hand, he touched the key, turned it and opened the lid. The remembrance of the letter, the answer to which had poisoned six months of his life, was now really exciting his curiosity. Had Magda kept it? He himself was keeping her answer in a drawer of his writing-table. Tactless or not . . . he wanted to know! The little box was filled with receipts and papers of various kinds; on the top was the letter which he had recently held in his hand and returned to his wife. He recognized it by the handwriting and the date on the postmark. But the letter had not been entirely slipped into the envelope, a corner of it was peeping out; Magda had probably read it several times, and put it back loosely. Another letter was folded into the large sheets which were covered with his mother-in-law's handwriting, well known to him. Hron could only see the endings of words which were written in an unknown, undeveloped hand.

He did not know why he did it, as he was in fact looking for something else, but he pulled out the sheet which was covered on all its four pages with sprawling, large letters. It was the attempt of a hand still awkward, and not much used to writing fluently. Irregular letters . . . the difference of thickness in the up- and down-strokes carefully observed . . . only children write like that. Which of the relatives . . . ?

He opened the sheet and read:

"My beloved Mummy, — How good of you to let me write to you again. I would like to write to you every day to tell you that I think of you and pray for you, because the clergyman tells us at school that we must pray for our parents. But as I cannot pray for Papa who is dead, I

pray for my dear Mama whom I love so much, and I wish she were with me, because I cannot be with her. I do not know why I cannot be with her, when every daughter is with her mother. I know I cannot be with my Papa when he is dead, but why not with my Mama? And when you say you love me, why do you not take me with you? When I ask the lady, she tells me that the gentleman would not like it. What gentleman would not like it? I think you must be in service like other mothers, and so you cannot have me with you, and I am so sorry I do not know where you are either. My beloved Mummy, I would hide in a corner and keep quite quiet, so as not to worry the gentleman, and all day long I would not come out of my corner and the gentleman need not see me, and would not scold you, because he would not know I was there. But at night, when you go to your little room I would kiss you, and sleep in your bed, and pray for you and your gentleman as I do now. I could go to school, the same as I do here, and you should be pleased with me, for I like my lessons, and I am going to be moved to a higher standard again. Oh my beloved mother, I should so like to have a photo of you; the lady has photos of her sisters and aunts and other relations. When the other lady came, who is my grandmother, I asked her for one, but she said I could not have it, because you had not got one. And she told me I must be good, or else I must never write to you or see you again. I cried very much, because I only see you once a year, and then I would never see you at all. My grandmother too cried, and said I might write to you again, that you had allowed it, and grandmother will come for this letter and send it to you, for little girls cannot send letters off by themselves, grandmother says.

"Dearest Mummy, come again, and come and see me on my birthday, which is on the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul; I shall be eleven. I kiss your hand and am your obedient daughter, MAGDA

"*June 15th.*"

Ivan Hron had read the letter thinking that it must have got by mistake into the envelope which bore his wife's address. But when he arrived at the signature "Magda," he started. His heart beat with the sudden shock. He felt an unusual wave of heat mount to his head and flood his cheeks. A thought struck him which was so strange that he was startled afresh, and tried not to finish it. He quickly took up the second letter in his mother-in-law's handwriting. He devoured its contents, and large drops of perspiration were standing on his forehead, as though he were running a race. He felt his feet giving way beneath him, and sat down to finish the letter. There was nothing suspicious in it, the usual home news, good advice, inquiries, remembrances to her husband and thanks for his last contribution to the household expenses. Only quite at the end: "I am sending you this letter which you will like to see, and am your loving mother. . . ."

There it was! That was the reference to the letter!

Ivan Hron wiped his forehead and read his mother-in-law's letter again, and then that of little eleven-years-old Magda. His wife's name!

He re-read it with the utmost attention.

Now, alas! he understood; but he also felt as though his head would burst. His Magda, his wife is little Magda's . . . impossible!

He sprang to his feet, caught up the little box, and went to his room with it. He locked the door, so as not to be disturbed, and hastily turned out the contents: letters, photographs, empty envelopes. But in spite of his eagerness he was careful to put them down in their proper order, so that nothing should betray afterwards that he had read anything. He felt like a criminal while he was following up Magda's secret. But even if it should be a crime, he was going to commit it!

His hands were trembling feverishly, as he went through the papers; he took all his father- and mother-in-law's letters out of their envelopes, read them at a glance . . . nothing, nothing! Suddenly he came upon another letter written in the sprawling hand . . . a second . . . a third.

There were no more. The one which he had read first was the longest. The others were the more unlettered the older their date. Hron understood; as she made greater progress at school she was the more able to express her thoughts; her letters became longer, more legible, more appealing. From each of the four letters spoke the longing of this unknown child to see her mother, to be with her always. This incoherent babbling, these laboured sentences were the expression of a homesick child, praying for the fulfilment of its dearest wish.

Hron sat quite still and reflected painfully; his thoughts were like red-hot wires that penetrated his brain. "My Magda . . . my Magda!" recurred over and over in his reflections, "and then this child, this second Magda. . . ."

He recalled the moment when he had seen Magda for the first time, remembered how he had wooed her and been refused, and finally accepted. What had happened between the moment when he had first met her and the day when he had at last taken her to his home?

And suddenly Hron turned to his wife's little box again. Did it contain nothing else? Would he find the explanation of this terrible calamity? He remembered that the salesman had drawn his attention to the double bottom when he had bought the box; he had forgotten the contrivance, but now he tried hastily to discover the little hiding-place. He removed the sides, pulled out two ornamental rosettes and . . . there was the bottom. In it were some faded papers, covered with writing . . . in Magda's hand. They looked like the beginnings of letters, or notes from a diary; loose leaves, torn out of a book.

Hron began to read these sheets; the handwriting varied considerably, they had evidently been written at odd moments on various occasions.

He read, and almost forgot to breathe. These leaves were the outpourings and anguished cries of a woman's soul in despair. If he had had any doubt as to the relationship of the two Magdas, these lines removed them. He saw the whole situation clearly. . . . What a fearful discovery! His own, his adored Magda!

Some of the sheets were quite fragmentary: "There are worse things than death," began one, "and I am on the rack. Everything that I possessed in life has been destroyed . . . our good name, my father's position after a life of hard work . . . all in one blow. The fruits of his labour are lost. But, terrible as these losses are — all the more because of their suddenness — they do not shatter me. I wish they did!

"But my fate is more terrible than this; that of my parents is its crowning disaster. The shame, oh the shame! Never-ending shame clings to my wasted life!

"It was all like a horrible, fantastic dream: but the crying of the little creature whom they have separated from me, the crying that I heard for a moment only, which was lost in the distance when they carried the little girl away, this crying was the proof of a dreadful reality.

"And Robert does not return! He has disappeared, and gives no sign of whether he is alive or dead. Alas! my fall should have helped him to rise, but then came my father's failure . . . and what can be my value now? Did ever two more terrible misfortunes meet?"

Another sheet began:

"He does not return. Perhaps he is seeking death, perhaps he may have found it. The misery of it! He is a coward; it would have needed energy on his part to begin life afresh, and his life would have given me back my life also. What a fate, to have been betrayed by a mountebank! But the most terrible thing about it is that that other man who came into my life, is again offering me his hand and asking for mine. I am in despair. I resist all I can, but there is my father, who is looking so ill; he does not say anything, but his dear old eyes make such an eloquent appeal . . . my mother was on her knees before me, wringing her hands and entreating me: Don't refuse him . . . consent!

"This other, good, honest man is to be deceived. My parents entreat me that it should be so. Shall I give in to their appeal? Shall I make up my mind to hide from him what sort of a wife he wishes to marry?

"And to be separated for ever from that innocent creature . . . disavow her for ever! For she will not die. I am sure my parents are praying that she might be taken, but my prayers are stronger, and she will live! I keep on praying that she will live. . . ."

Again on another sheet:

"The decision has been made; my conscience has tormented me from the moment when my father said 'Yes' for me. Do I care for him? Have I a right to say I love the man whom I approach with a lie? How can I bear his eyes, how shall I breathe in his embraces?

"They have tormented me, forced my hands! They took away my child, I do not know where she is. I want to see her . . . I am dying with longing to kiss her, press her to my heart . . . where is she?

"They promised that I should see her if I consented to marry him. My child, what a price to pay for your kisses! Unfortunate Ivan! What a price for you to pay for me . . . how you are being deceived. . . ."

On the last sheet, on which the first lines had been crossed out, he read:

"To-morrow is my wedding day . . . I feel as though it were my funeral. Alas! I feel something is being carried to its grave. . . . I myself am burying it. I am murdering my peace of mind . . . perhaps I am also murdering Ivan's happiness.

"And my father and mother kiss me and embrace me. Neither of them says a word about it, but their eyes are saying a great deal. They are grateful to me that I have yielded, that I have consented to . . . sell myself. I cannot express what I feel when I see Ivan, full of love, beaming with happiness because I am to be his. . . .

"There is one thought of comfort in these bitter, desperate hours for which I am thanking heaven: Robert is dead. He has gone out of my life; his shadow will never fall between Ivan and me, he will never come back.

"I do not know if the moment will ever come when I shall dare to say that I love Ivan. I tremble when I think of his asking me whether I love him. And perhaps he will ask me to-morrow . . . to-morrow! But the thought that that coward is dead is balm to my soul."

Ivan Hron had finished the perusal of the papers; he breathed a sigh of relief. After what he had read, this fact that the unknown father of little Magda was no longer alive, was a load off his mind. He was breathing audibly, like a man waking up out of a heavy sleep.

"Whoever he was, he is dead now. . . ."

Ivan Hron stared at the sheets and fragmentary notes in front of him with burning eyes; then he slowly put his elbows on to the table and buried his head in his hands; his soul had been profoundly stirred, and a painful sob broke from his compressed throat. A moment later his whole body, his shoulders and hands and head began to tremble, and large tears fell upon the faded, traitorous leaves.

It did not occur to him to think of how long it was since he had cried, nor that he was a strong man with experience of life, and that he ought not to give way; he only felt a fearful scorching pain, such as he had felt once before in his life at the time when he had been banished from his home on account of his ill-considered youthful exploit. But at that time he had been young, and the whole world lay open before him. He had then sustained an irreparable loss, but from the depth of his despair he looked for the dawn of a future. What was left to him now? He was now living

that future to which he had been looking forward then; he had climbed to the summit of his life, there was no going higher or further. His daily life was circumscribed, there would be no great changes either in his career or in his home; he had come to the limits of both. He was at the head of his office and he was married; this was the last stage of his life, and though it might go on for another ten or twenty years, it would always be the same. He would get older, one day he would retire; there were no other prospects. He well knew the limits within which he was living, and now, just as he was approaching their border, this thing happened, to poison both the past and the future for him!

Ivan Hron wept for a long time, until his tears naturally ceased to flow. Only now and then convulsive spasms betrayed his inward crying. But even the spasms became less frequent; there was a sob from time to time, and at last a silence.

He sat for a while, supporting his head in his hand. He did not realize how great the relief had been which his tears had given him. When he raised his head, his tears had ceased to flow, only his eyes were a little swollen and inflamed. The expression of his face was calm; the storm had passed. He looked as though he had resigned himself to an irreparable, unalterable fate.

He took his pocket-handkerchief and wiped his eyes; then he quietly replaced the sheets of papers, letters, photographs and trifles in the box in their proper order. Nothing should betray their having been touched by an unauthorized hand. When he took up little Magda's fateful letter, which had so recently caused him the bitterest moment of his life, he glanced once more at the lines written by this unknown, pining little creature. Now he could enter into it much more. Alas! How much bitterness this little heart had already had to taste! But how great must have been the pain that his wife had suffered all the time since she had been tied to him and separated from her child . . . day by day, whole months, years . . . ten long years. What fortitude this delicate woman had shown in mastering herself and enduring the separation . . . or was she upheld by some hope? What was this hope?

Hron stopped short at the words: "Dearest Mummy, come again, come on my birthday, on the day of St. Peter and St. Paul. . . ."

Yes, Magda had complied with her wish. It was a week since she went away, and to-day was St. Peter and St. Paul. At the moment when her fateful secret had revealed itself to him accidentally, a little creature in some distant place was laughing with joy at her mother's embrace, and his wife was happy in the presence of her growing daughter, answering her thousand questions, asking a thousand herself, kissing her, kissing her for a whole year. But in the midst of all this love and tenderness the clock would strike mercilessly, the day would wane, and Magda press her child closer and yet closer . . . her child, from whom she must tear herself after

a few hours, to be separated again for a whole year. And even if she should think of him, her husband, how bitter must that thought be to her! She would have to return to him without betraying by a single word what she had gone through. Her heart would break with the pain of another separation, yet she might not complain; she must master herself with all her strength, so as not to arouse his suspicion. Where would her thoughts be before she returned to him, when he would press her to his heart and kiss her? Every caress which he had taken to himself had really been meant for her little daughter. When she passed her hand over his head she probably thought of her. And perhaps she hoped to win his forgiveness at the moment when he might discover her secret, with the care, tenderness and attention which she had given him. Did she dread that moment? Surely, it must haunt her!

Ivan's heart was caught up in a feeling of unbounded pity. The feeling which was uppermost in his mind was not that he had been deceived, but that he had been excluded from a triple alliance.

Slowly he folded up the letter and put it, and what was left of other things, back into their place, and carried the box to Magda's room. He carefully replaced it in the drawer, which he locked, so that Magda should have no idea that her carelessness had induced any one to open it.

As he left the room, he happened to look into a glass, and noticed his inflamed, swollen eyes. He hurried into his room, poured water into his basin, adding a little lavender water, and sponged and dried his face. When he had done this and brushed his dishevelled hair, Hron slowly changed his clothes. The large, empty rooms seemed lonely, and he felt that he must get away from them into the fresh air, to some place where he would not be likely to meet many people. He could not bear the idea of seeing any one he knew; he wanted to be alone, to reflect, to work out this problem and come to a resolution. He locked his wife's room and put the key in his pocket, in case the servant should spy upon her secret in his absence. How glad he was that that moment had found him alone; he had allowed the girl to go to a procession. No one had surprised him, no one knew that anything had happened.

He slowly went down the stairs. His thoughts were moving round and round in a strange circle. A picture of Doré's from the *édition de luxe* of his Bible occurred to him; it represented the expulsion from paradise. As he left his house he felt as though he too were being driven from his paradise. Day by day he had hastened hither to meet his beloved Magda. He thought of her return the next day and shivered. How would he feel at meeting her? Would he be able to master his features sufficiently for her not to see that he now knew what she had kept a secret for so long, what perhaps she had meant to keep a secret for ever? What kind of a life between them would it be if Magda discovered *his* secret?

If only he could escape meeting friends to-day! He wished he were a stranger to all the world.

He went to a part of Prague where he had hardly ever been before, across the "little bridge" and through the passages of the crooked old town on the banks of the Moldavia. It was a fine day; all those who could walk had left the streets behind; Hron met only a few strangers. The place seemed almost deserted. He crossed the river by the stone bridge and turned through a side-street towards the Bruska. But that was full of people, so he went through the archway and out into the fields.

He breathed a sigh of relief when he was there, but the consciousness of his sorrow did not leave him. He thought of his wedding-day and his married life. His thoughts came and went incoherently; he thought of the time before his marriage. Who was this man who had been the first to win Magda's heart, her whole heart, even herself? Who was he, the father of Magda, who was dead? When had all that happened? And again he felt the tears rising in his throat, and an immeasurable pain, as though he had lost what he treasured most. But at that time . . . Magda had not been his! He also thought of the moments when their childlessness had been most bitter to him; when he had looked enviously at his friends' families and their happiness, when he had romped with their children. Now he understood Magda's mute, eloquent looks on those occasions, which had haunted him. "If that were my child!" she must have thought. Yes: she was thinking of her own child who was living hidden, a stranger among strangers, uncaressed, without a father, and deprived of her mother too during all the years when she most needed her. That was what her looks meant . . . it was that . . . that! At moments when Hron had caressed other children her thoughts, with all the suppressed, secret mother-instinct fled to her own lonely little daughter whom she dared not acknowledge, of whom she might not be proud, whom she might not kiss before all the world, nor dress her, nor take her to school, whom she could not tuck up at night, nor prepare Santa Claus surprises for her, and taste that sweetest of all joys, that of seeing a little face beam with delight. The child had been robbed of everything, and so had she. What an unending atonement! She had a child which she could not take into her own home. He felt that it was only now that he knew her really, and in spite of all the bitterness which filled his heart he sighed: "Poor Magda!" Magda had a child! Hron suddenly stopped dead; his thoughts glanced off in another direction. She *had* a child!

Ivan Hron took off his hat, wiped his forehead and looked straight in front of him at the green field. But he did not know what he was looking at, he was looking inwards. All the morbid moments of his brooding on the problem of their childlessness passed before his soul. He remembered how he had tormented himself to find the cause of it. And his wife had had . . . she had a child!

He stood, drawing deep breaths.

What was passing in Magda's mind, if she saw through him? Did she

guess that he suspected the fault to be hers? And she had to bear the blame in silence.

He was overcome by remorse. He now realized fully how difficult the moment of their meeting would be.

Ivan Hron started off again along the edge of the field; he did not care whither he was going, he only sought for an escape from the labyrinth of his thoughts. He counted neither moments nor hours, he did not know how long he had been wandering about, when the setting sun reminded him that night was approaching.

He turned back towards Prague hurriedly, without minding by which road he went, noticing nothing by the way. From the Belvedere he turned to cross the Francis-Joseph bridge.

Not till he had reached the narrow Elisabeth Street did he become conscious of ordinary daily life again. He glanced at the two rows of high houses with their countless windows, and the thought struck him:

"Now, this is only a small fraction of a big town, yet what a multitude of little unimportant human beings, what life-stories, problems, emotions and struggles lie hidden behind all those windows, in all the rooms inhabited by people; under the roofs of the splendid mansions with balconies as well as under those of back-alleys. And when these struggling souls come out into the streets, they hide what is passing in them."

He was suddenly seized by a fear that some one might guess from his looks how miserable, humbled and desperate he felt. No! Only he himself should know what had happened to him; no one should stand still and look after him, pitying him and thinking: "Poor Hron, whatever is the matter with him?" As though he had not a trouble in the world, Hron pulled down his waistcoat, looked at his watch, felt whether he had a cigar with him, lit it deliberately, and walked towards Joseph's Square.

Along the narrow Elisabeth Street human life had flowed like a stream, but in Joseph Square it expanded in broad billows like a sea. All the excursionists converged hither to be scattered in all directions. The trams were rattling past, making the flag-stones tremble. Almost forgetting his troubles, he looked at the crowds which were storming the cars. These people, battling for room to sit or stand in them, seemed to him like lunatics. They fought their way with their elbows, pushed others off the steps to mount in their place; some positively butted into a medley of bodies and limbs, and others who had already boarded a car, were suddenly seized with fear and tried to alight again. Hats fell from their heads; some caught their dresses, and the seams of their garments were strained to the utmost, or gave way.

"What do they mean by it?" thought Hron, "why this wild struggle?"

The gas-lamps were beginning to sparkle . . . one . . . another . . . a third. Ivan Hron watched the lamplighter with his pole who went regularly from post to post with his head bent, and without minding the wild

tumult. A yellow mail-cart rattled past; the full letter boxes of the whole town would now yield their contents. Bourgeois with their wives returned from their walks; the women led the bigger children by the hand, the men carried the little ones. A detachment of firemen were crossing the street. The police were changing patrols.

Ivan felt that there was something restful to his mind in all this noise and movement, rattling and crowding. By degrees he became calmer. His senses, strained to breaking point by the great shock, relaxed and were able to take in other impressions. He put his hat, which had slipped back, straight, and walked more firmly.

"Forget it all . . . at least for a while, for to-night!"

He made up his mind to join a party of his friends at a restaurant, so as to change his thoughts. He absolutely must think of something else, he had brooded enough. He meant to drink a good deal. Many people cure their troubles with wine; he too would try this remedy. He must avoid being alone in the empty house; he must take home an atmosphere of conviviality, else he would feel suffocated. And Hron went into a restaurant where he would be sure to meet friends.

But Ivan was one of those men who did not easily get drunk; his strong head could always master the effect of the wine, and he did not care to drink far beyond his measure. Yet the wine cheered him; he listened to the talk and gossip, and forced himself to join in it. He spent several hours in this noisy company, and received his friends' respectful remembrances to his wife almost cheerfully. It was past midnight when he returned home. The servant was snoring in her bedroom next the kitchen. Ivan gently locked the door and went through the hall on tiptoe. He found a letter from his wife on the table; she let him know by which train she intended to arrive. He lit the candles in his bedroom and went to bed with a book. But he had not been reading many lines when his hands with the book slowly dropped on the coverlet, and he looked across at the portrait of his wife over the chesterfield. For nearly an hour he lay quite still, looking fixedly at the lovely face which was so dear to him. He was painfully winning through to a resolution. Presently his lips moved without a sound, framing the words: "It shall be so." Perhaps he hardly heard them himself; he had instinctively given form to the last link in the chain of his thoughts, which might prove a solution of the problem.

Then he sat up in bed and put out both candles in the branch-candlestick. When he lay back in his pillows he whispered reproachfully: "Magda, Magda!"

Magda Hron had told her husband that she would arrive on the last day of June by the afternoon train. Ivan was thankful that it would be in the later part of the day, almost in the evening; he would have the whole day to set his mind in order, as he said to himself.

He had hoped for this when he had returned from the restaurant the night before. But apparently the setting in order took him a shorter time than he had anticipated. Although he had been out unusually late the night before and had not gone to sleep for a good while, he awoke at an early hour and got up at once. He looked thoughtful but calm, his face betrayed no trace of yesterday's struggle. The storm had passed, his resolution held firm.

What was his resolution? Was he going to put his wife away? Or induce her to consent to a separation with maintenance for her and her daughter? This thought had occurred to him, but had been rejected at once. He realized that he could not hope to redeem his over-insistence in the past, nor ought to punish his wife by bringing an action. He was a prominent man, and his position would not stand a scandal; but apart from that, what would he gain by violent measures? Would he be the happier for them? Would they not utterly destroy his future life? Was it likely that Magda would be happy, if the moment which restored her to her daughter were to rob her of her husband and home? And even if she should bear this fate without murmuring, could he live without her after the ten years of purest harmony between them, and when he loved her as much now as when he took her to his house for the first time? Nay . . . since yesterday he loved her with a passion which was mingled with pain; when he had learnt that he had a rival in the child, he had begun to tremble for his place in her heart.

Hron's struggle was over, he looked composed. He dressed quickly, breakfasted, and told the servant at what time her mistress would return, and what she was to prepare, lit his cigar and left the house. It was too early to go to his office, so he decided to go for a walk. A stroll without a set purpose on this warm, sunny morning of the departing June would strengthen yesterday's resolution; he would breathe the fresh air, look at happy faces of people who went in all directions about their daily duties, taking them up at the point where they had left them yesterday, and trying not to show traces of intervening struggles.

He passed the Girls' High School. It was nearly eight o'clock, the children were hurrying to school. Many of them were accompanied by servants, elder sisters, or mothers. Hron stood still and from a distance watched the mothers taking leave of their darlings. They bent over them, gave them last instructions, then they kissed them lovingly and looked after them till they had disappeared in the school-entrance and winding corridors. His Magda would do the same; he knew she would not leave the child until she was quite sure she was safe. There was a faint smile on Hron's face when this thought crossed his mind like a flash. The stream of children was ebbing away: now it had been absorbed by the schoolhouse. Only a few late-comers ran in quickly, afraid of missing the begin-

ning of the lesson; at last the place was completely deserted. Hron walked on towards his office.

The hours were all too slow for him that day. He could hardly wait for his wife's return. He went to the Sophia Island, to dine in company with a few friends whose families were already in the country.

"Still a grass-widower?" some of them asked him.

"Only till to-night," he answered with a smile, "my wife will return this afternoon from her visit to her parents; then it will be only a few days before we are off on our holiday somewhere. Our boxes are ready to be packed."

"Where are you going, Direktor?"

"Perhaps to Berlin and Hamburg on the way to Heligoland, or a quiet seaside place like Travemünde, perhaps in the other direction, to Munich, Salzburg and the Alpine Lakes. I don't know yet, I shall see what my wife proposes."

Hron was absent-minded at dinner and hurried away soon after, as though he were afraid to miss the train. He gulped down his cup of black coffee and went home. He opened the windows in his wife's room and in the dining-room, so that she should not find them stuffy on her return. He put a bunch of fresh flowers into the bedroom, carnations and roses, which he had bought on his way home. He locked her room, told the servant to have dinner ready at seven o'clock, and loitered towards his office, although the official hour had not yet struck, as though he could hurry on the clock. He could hardly contain himself.

But the nearer six o'clock and with it her arrival approached, the more uneasy he became, as if after all he dreaded their meeting. He was grateful to the chief cashier for joining him as far as the station when he left the Bank; he did not wish to be alone. And when the cashier had left him, he was drawn into a vortex of departing and arriving people; he felt dazed with the perpetual ringing of bells, shouting of the staff, thundering of trains which arrived from both directions. Yet he welcomed the infernal noise; it would sufficiently absorb Magda's senses not to make her look too closely at his features, and discover the emotion which had flushed his cheeks.

Then her train was signalled, and rolled into the station a few minutes later. He at once saw her, as she was alighting. A slight trembling seized him, a few steps brought him near to her. The blood mounted to her face. He was relieved that he had to turn and speak to a porter before addressing her. Magda took his arm and walked on quickly, almost drawing him forward; she was looking straight ahead. Her cheeks were almost on fire. Hron did not guess or understand that she too always suffered from great nervousness when she met him again for the first time. She was almost dying with fear that she might betray in some way whence she came and of what nature her visit had been. All her attention was fixed on guard-

ing her secret, lest her husband should suspect her. But he had pressed her hand and drawn it closer . . . no, he suspected nothing! She was breathing more freely while he was helping her to get into the carriage, and while the wheels were rattling over the cobblestones. Saved once more!

"Well, Magda," said Hron, breaking the silence which had reigned between them since they had got into the carriage, and was beginning to frighten him, "have you had a good time? No disappointments?"

"Excellent, Ivan, everything went right," answered his wife.

"You found them all well?"

"Yes, quite. Father had not been well about a month ago. They did not tell me, because they did not want me to be anxious. But he is better, he is really quite well again."

"You found it hard to part with them, didn't you, Magda?" said Hron.

The blood again mounted to Magda's cheek. Her eyes became fixed, and did not meet his. Oh, how hard it had been to part with that little creature! But she was obliged to give an answer.

"You know I am fond of my parents, and they are getting old; every year is like a gift. And yet every year I leave them with the hope of seeing them the next."

"And they have not yet made up their minds to come and live in Prague?" he asked. "We would find a charming, cosy little nest for them and make them very comfortable. Haven't you tried to persuade them?"

Hron made this proposal every year on Magda's return from her old home, but she shrank from it. She would indeed have liked to have her parents near her, but if they came to Prague, how could she see little Magda? What pretext could she find? Two kinds of love were ever struggling within her, but the stronger, the mother-love always won the day.

"You are so kind, Ivan," she answered, "but I don't think we shall persuade them. They are too old; they had better stay in the surroundings in which they have lived all their lives; they would hardly get used to the life in Prague. If anything happened to them they would be sure to think it was because they had left their old home. Besides, it would mean greater expense for you; as it is you are showing them so much kindness that I don't know how I can ever be grateful enough to you."

She warmly pressed his hand.

Ivan Hron was unspeakably happy. He kept her hand in his and said gently: "Be fond of me always, Magda. It is the sweetest gratitude you can give me."

They were both silent after that for the few minutes which it took to reach their home.

Two days later the couple left Prague. Ivan was restless, but not because he wanted a change of scene. He was almost unwilling to travel this

year, indeed, quite unwilling. He would have liked to have carried out his plan at once, but he could not think of a cogent reason to give to his wife for not going for their usual trip. It was too late to pretend that he could not get leave; everything had been settled and prepared before Magda started to go to her parents. And Magda knew how he loved to travel. So they started, and went as far as Munich.

Hron was hoping that in strange surroundings, away from the daily round, and among strangers, he might more easily find an opportunity of saying what he wanted to say. On their travels, when they were closer companions than usual, they were always more tender, more intimate than at home. Hron always felt as though they were lovers.

The opportunity for which he was longing presented itself earlier than he thought. They stayed in Munich for a week, and went for a trip on the Stahrenberg Lake on their last day. It was a lovely, sunny morning. A light breeze was rippling the surface of the lake, when they left the train at Stahrenberg, to board the comfortable steamer "Wittelsbach." Their first objective was charming Leoni, where they ascended to the Rottmann's Height, and enjoyed the lovely view over the distant Alps. After an hour and a half they returned to the landing-stage, to go further up the lake by another steamer. A small family, perhaps belonging to the villa-colony of Leoni, boarded the steamer "Bavaria" at the same time; they were a young couple with two children, a boy of about three, a curly, sunburnt, restless little rogue, who ran about the deck like quicksilver, and a pale, almost transparent-looking girl of five, who was very much muffled up. It was easy to guess that this child with waxen cheeks had been racked by a severe illness quite recently, in fact, it had apparently not yet quite relaxed its hold upon the victim. The boy was looked after by a handsome, careful young girl, but the mother herself was nursing her little daughter, happy at being able to take her out on the lake again for the first time. She hardly took her eyes off the precious convalescent, at whose bed, no doubt, she had watched for whole nights with bitter tears and fervent prayers.

With her tired, hollow eyes the little girl was looking at the lake, beneath the opalescent surface of which slumbered the green depth. They were fixed on one spot, as though she were expecting to see mermaids rising from the water; she knew them well, her mother had often told her the story. Now and then the child coughed, and then the young mother would cover her throat more closely with the silk handkerchief, or wrap the small, pointed elbows round with a cloak. And a kiss would accompany each of these movements.

Ivan Hron was watching his wife . . . her eyes had been resting for a long time on the little girl, and returned to her over and over again. Ivan read what was passing in her mind: "She is thinking of her little one."

The lovely morning, the fresh strong air, the view of the distant Alps

had attuned his soul to tenderness; he was more receptive, more sensitive than usual. He guessed his wife's thoughts: yes, she is thinking of her child. Her little Magda too might be taken with a severe illness, might be racked by fever. In her delirium she would call for her mother. Yet not her soft hand but a stranger's would minister to her; her mother dare not come. Perhaps in her last battle with death her dim eyes would be half opened to seek those she had loved above all things, her hands would be stretched out to embrace the head whose first and last thought was for her child . . . in vain, in vain! And her last dying groan would be wrung from her by the pain that her little heart could not break at her mother's breast.

Ivan Hron's eyes grew dim at this thought, and as though their thoughts had met, he heard a deep sigh which rose from his wife's bosom.

He took her hand. "You are looking at that poor child, Magda, you are sorry for her . . ."

His wife did not answer; her eyes looked into vacancy, her eyelids trembled.

"Yet how happy this child is, all the same," Ivan continued almost in a whisper. "She is carefully nursed, her mother watches her like a guardian angel."

Two large tears ran down Magdalena's cheeks; she had not the courage to look at her husband.

"Listen, Magda," said Ivan, taking her hand, "it has long been my intention to tell you something; there are so many orphans who do not belong to a soul in this world, who are in want of what they most need, and do not know what it means to be really loved and cared for. And as we ourselves have not been so fortunate as to have a family of our own, and we have no children to consider, could we not adopt one of those lonely children who have no home? And it would be more lively for us, Magda. . . ."

Magda did not answer; but the heaving of her breast showed the deep emotion in her soul, and what a storm of thoughts and conflicts her husband's words had roused.

"You do not answer, Magda, you do not agree? You do not care about it?"

"Do as you wish." Her words were almost inaudible.

"Ah, I knew you would not thwart me, Magda," said Ivan gently. "And if you should be thinking about your people, believe me, in case I should die unexpectedly no one will be curtailed by this increase in our family. I have made provisions for everybody as well as you. Look," he continued eagerly, "some little boy who has neither father nor mother shall find them in us. Would you like me to look out for a curly little fellow like this one?"

Magda's hand was trembling in his. "As you like, Ivan; yes, I agree."

Ivan was silent, then he began again: "Or would you rather have a little girl? A little creature whose mind would begin to open out when she lived with us; she would soon get used to us and would see her parents in us . . . we could give her our names. You'd rather have a girl, wouldn't you, Magda? A girl is more domesticated; you could dress her, and make of her what you liked, give her mind its proper bent . . . yes, I think you would get more quickly used to a girl, wouldn't you?"

The young woman's eyes looked glassy, although the two tears on her cheeks had dried, but a fresh pain which would have no end was beginning to take possession of her soul. Her fixed eyes, unable to perceive anything in her immediate surroundings, looked into the far distance, and her heart went out in immeasurable sorrow, hunted to death. If ever she had dared to hope that the day might come when she could acknowledge little Magda, if ever a ray of hope had lighted up her soul . . . all that would be lost now. What she had felt for her own, what she would have done for her with her last breath, was now to be given to an unknown child. The place which she had dreamt of for the unfortunate little creature would never be taken by her. Oh, the pain of it! The awful punishment for a single moment of weakness, the endless atonement for the sin of another! Her Magda would now be really lost to her; she would be for ever excluded from her rightful place.

The thought of humbling herself before her husband and revealing her secret, flashed through her mind. But she forced it away from her. Should she, at the moment when he was thinking of doing good and giving a home and parents to some unfortunate being, crush him with her dreadful disclosure?

After a long pause, and without looking at him: "Yes, do so," she said in a whisper.

"You really mean it, and you don't even look at me?" said Hron as with a gentle reproach. "I know it is hard to speak of these things, but I am afraid there is no prospect of a change. But all the same, if you do not like the idea. . . ."

When later on Magda remembered this moment, she was conscious of having fought a hard battle with herself for the second time in her life, just as hard as that after which she had consented to accept Ivan's hand. But she now had the strength to turn to him, and look at him with her brimming eyes, while her hand gently returned the pressure of his right hand. She said firmly: "Not at all, I quite agree with you."

The subject was not mentioned between them again. The day was bright, and everything looked smiling, the rays of the July sun shone warm upon them, but they remained silent all day. The deep melancholy which had taken possession of her could not be banished from Magda's face. Hron at first tried to distract her, but ended by being lost in silent reflection too. For him also this afternoon's conversation had meant a hard

struggle. He had prepared himself for many days, and every time he had meant to begin, the words had stuck in his throat. But in spite of his serious mood, he had a feeling of deep satisfaction, and if he had been a more introspective man, he would have said to himself that he was really immensely happy.

After this conversation with his wife, Ivan became restless. He shortened the remainder of their trip, hurried from place to place, and left unvisited some in which he had meant to make a stay. He often secretly watched Magda, and saw how she was suffering. She mastered herself with all her strength, tried to conquer the apprehension which Ivan's intention had roused in her, and even made attempts to appear gay. Perhaps she secretly clung to the hope that something would prevent the plan at the last moment. But how could that be? She could not tell. If she were to change his mind in favour of her daughter, she would have to speak. Could that change possibly be in her child's and her own favour? Might she not be sent away with her unfortunate child at once? She could do nothing. And Ivan, who read her thoughts, became himself subject to depression. His nature, more robust than hers, was not affected as deeply as her sensitive soul, yet he became more and more anxious to put an end to this state of uncertainty. The solution of the problem was in his hand, and he fervently desired to solve it; yet when he thought of what it would mean, he trembled for Magda and for himself.

In Salzburg rainy weather set in, which gave him a pretext for returning to Prague without delay. Magda did not seem to care what they did; nothing had appealed to her on this journey, neither did she look forward to going home. Dull indifference had now taken possession of her. What did it matter whether she were away or at home? The situation was desperate in any case. There was no way out of the impasse. She strained all her senses to get hold of an idea, but none presented itself; not a single flash came to light up the heavy gloom of her horizon.

They were home again. Ivan Hron's leave had not yet expired. He went to his office to see whether there were news of any importance, but after he had settled that he need not resume his duties for another fortnight, he returned to his wife. On the next day he made preparations for another journey. "I have to attend to some business in the country, Magda," he said, "I want to settle it while I am on leave. But I shall be back in a couple of days or so, and if you like we can then go for another trip. Perhaps a favourable wind may blow me in the direction of your home. I may see your parents; but I am not sure."

When he took leave of her, with his bag in his hand, he remarked casually: "Well, Magda, if I should find a little orphan by the wayside, you would not mind my bringing her along? It would be best to get one from the country; all her former ties, whatever they might be, would then be severed, and she would begin a new life in Prague. If you should not take to her, we will send her back."

"Do as you think best," said Magda with resignation. "I am sure I shall approve of your choice; you are a man who can be trusted."

"If I succeed, I will write and let you know," said Hron, tenderly embracing his wife, and left the house.

Three days passed. Hron had not written. But on the morning of the fourth day she received a letter:

"DEAREST MAGDA, — I have found what I was looking for, a little girl without father and mother. She is not quite so small a child as you might fancy, but I hope you will take to her all the same. Meet us the day after to-morrow at the North Western Station at 1 P.M. Be sure to have dinner ready at once; we shall probably be hungry. Greatly looking forward to our meeting — Your

IVAN."

Magda went towards the station to meet her husband, with a heavy heart. She walked up and down the platform, and her breath stopped when she heard the whistle of the approaching train. Immovable, as though she were rooted to the spot, the young woman stood, her eyes only were moving and wandered from one carriage to another, seeking the one from which her husband would alight with the child. But the passengers, each one looking for the friends or relatives who would meet them, passed her; one carriage after another discharged its occupants, and at last the train was empty; the doors stood out like wooden wings, the engine hissed feebly. Ivan was nowhere to be seen. He had not come.

Magda stood a little while longer, waiting to see if her husband would appear after all; at last she wondered whether she had made a mistake in the time. Having asked some questions from uncommunicative officials, which were not answered any too willingly, she returned home. The thought that something might have happened to her husband did not occur to her. She thought that she might not have read his note carefully enough, or that he had made a mistake in the time. Besides, she was too much engrossed in other things. Her thoughts were far away in a remote little village in the North-east of Bohemia with her Magda . . . her Magda who did not know that her place would now be taken by another child.

Magda had gone up the front door steps of her house and was pressing the electric bell.

How lonely the house had felt while Ivan had been away!

The door was opened at once, and . . . by Ivan himself. She was taken aback, almost startled, so that he had to draw her into the hall. He kissed her and said: "You have had the trouble for nothing, Magda, forgive me. I altered my plans at the last moment, and we came by the main line. There was no time to let you know, so I was obliged to let you take a walk by yourself. But come in now, come and see. . . ."

"'We ' came! Then she is here!"

Suddenly Magda's feet refused to move; she tried in vain to follow her husband. He gently put his arm round her shoulders and led her, so that she was obliged to move forward. Half-leading, half-drawing her, he took her as far as the dining-room door which he opened. When he spoke encouragingly to her once more, there was a slight tremor in his voice. "Come now, Magda," he said, "come and tell me if you are pleased with me." He pushed her gently forward without releasing his hold upon her.

Magda looked into the room, where a shy little girl was sitting on the sofa. She looked startled, and perhaps a little frightened after all the changes she had lived through during the last two days. Her large brown eyes were looking towards the door when she heard the voice of the man whom she had only so lately met for the first time. But when she saw Magda appear on the threshold, she sprang to her feet, her cheeks burned, and she cried: "Mummy!"

"Magda!"

Magdalena's voice was choked, the last syllable remained unspoken. The blood left her face, her body was swaying. She clutched the fingers of Ivan's right hand as though she were drowning; still she could not stand, and sank down on her knees which had given way beneath her.

"Magda," cried Hron, trying to hold her up, "pull yourself together, little mother."

Magda resisted. Not standing . . . only kneeling she could listen to the terrible things which a deceived husband must now speak.

But his arms lifted her up completely, and his right hand raised her head which had dropped on to her chest.

"Magda," he whispered, trembling all over, "be brave, don't frighten our little daughter."

He lifted her head almost by force, to look into her eyes. But she had closed them; a deathly pallor had spread over her face, her teeth were chattering as in a fever. She could hardly utter the words: "Who told you, Ivan, who told you?"

"Nobody told me." Hron passed his hand over her cold cheek. "I want you to be perfectly happy, my dearest child. Now, please go and welcome the other Magda, else she will begin to cry. Come, little daughter, give your mother courage."

The child hesitated for a moment, then she ran up to her mother, threw her arms round her body, and cried anxiously: "Mummy, Mummy, what is the matter with you?"

But Magda, before Ivan knew what she was doing, or could prevent it, had seized his right hand and pressed it to her lips. It was not till now that the truth flashed upon her. Ivan had brought this about, but not to accuse or punish her. Hot tears fell on his hands, and when at last he

could take her head in both his hands to kiss her, her whole soul looked in gratitude out of her brimming eyes.

"Ivan . . . Ivan," her lips trembled, "do you think my whole life will be enough in return for what you are doing for this fatherless child?"

"What? Fatherless!" Ivan cried gaily, so as not to break down himself, "she has had a father for two whole days . . . he has been found, he has come to claim her, here is documentary evidence . . . look here."

He put his hand in his breast pocket, drew forth a document and waved it over her head: "While I was about it I have brought Magda's christening certificate as well, so now we can enter her at the High School after the holidays. But enough of all this. The poor little thing is waiting to be kissed!"

In a moment the little girl was buried in her mother's arms.

Ivan looked with infinite love at his wife, whose face had suddenly grown crimson. After a little while he said: "Now, little woman, give the child something to eat, I believe she is famished. And after dinner you had better get her some clothes that she is fit to be seen in in a town . . . how nice it will be to have something to be busy about! And to-morrow, or the day after, we will go right away from Prague once more, and get used to our little family in some pretty hiding-place."

The Scandinavian Countries

INTRODUCTION

OF the four countries — Iceland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway — included under the term Scandinavian, only the last two are represented in this collection.

The early literature of Iceland, including the two great *Eddas* and numerous sagas, is especially rich in stories of many kinds. Most of these were composed and collected between the Ninth and the Fourteenth centuries, A.D.

Owing to the close relationship that has always existed between Iceland and the other Scandinavian countries, the Icelandic legends and chronicles have exercised considerable influence over the writers of these countries.

Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, all have literary traditions that can be traced back to the Middle Ages, but it can safely be said that not until the Eighteenth Century was there any serious or important effort on the part of writers to produce fiction. In the Nineteenth Century, however, all the Scandinavian lands produced novelists and tellers of tales, many of whom have become famous outside their native countries. In Denmark, for instance, there were Hans Christian Andersen, Meyer Goldschmidt, J. P. Jacobsen and Hermann Bang, not to mention the more recent writers; in Norway, Asbjörnson and Moe, writers and collectors of charming folk tales; Björnson and Kielland and Lie, and the moderns Hamsun and Bojer; while in Sweden the extraordinary Strindberg and the more recent Selma Lagerlöf, Hallström, Heidenstamm and Geijerstam have made Swedish fiction known throughout the world.

On the whole, the modern Scandinavians have specialised largely in the writing of fiction.

In the work of Björnson and Bang, the short novel was brought to a high point of artistic development.

BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON

(1832–1910)

BJÖRNSON is one of the great national figures of Norway, and is considered one of the founders of modern Norwegian literature. As novelist, poet, dramatist, moralist and political leader, he exercised immeasurable power over his countrymen. His short novel, *Synnöve Solbakken*, appeared in 1857. This was the first of a series of short novels, a type of fiction in which Björnson excelled. *The Bridal March* appeared in 1872.

The translation here used is anonymous. It appeared in *The Novels of Björnstjerne Björnson*, edited by Edmund Gosse. It is reprinted by permission of the publisher, William Heinemann, Ltd., London, 1912.

THE BRIDAL MARCH

THERE lived last century, in one of the high-lying inland valleys of Norway, a fiddler, who has become in some degree a legendary personage. Of the tunes and marches ascribed to him, some are said to have been inspired by the Trolls, one he heard from the devil himself, another he made to save his life, &c., &c. But the most famous of all is a Bridal March; and *its* story does not end with the story of his life.

Fiddler Ole Haugen was a poor cottar high among the mountains. He had a daughter, Aslaug, who had inherited his cleverness. Though she could not play his fiddle, there was music in everything she did — in her talk, her singing, her walk, her dancing.

At the great farm of Tingvold, down in the valley, a young man had come home from his travels. He was the third son of the rich peasant owner, but his two elder brothers had been drowned in a flood, so the farm was to come to him. He met Aslaug at a wedding and fell in love with her. In those days it was an unheard-of thing that a well-to-do peasant of old family should court a girl of Aslaug's class. But this young fellow had been long away, and he let his parents know that he had made enough out in the world to live upon, and that if he could not have what he wanted at home, he would let the farm go. It was prophesied that this indifference to the claims of family and property would bring its own punishment. Some said that Ole Haugen had brought it about, by means only darkly hinted at.

So much is certain, that while the conflict between the young man and his parents was going on, Haugen was in the best of spirits. When the battle was over, he said that he had already made them a Bridal March, one that would never go out of the family of Tingvold — but woe to the girl, he added, whom it did not play to church as happy a bride as the cottar's daughter, Aslaug Haugen! And here again people talked of the influence of some mysterious evil power.

So runs the story. It is a fact that to this day the people of that mountain district have a peculiar gift of music and song, which then must have been greater still. Such a thing is not kept up without some one caring for and adding to the original treasure, and Ole Haugen was the man who did it in his time.

Tradition goes on to tell that just as Ole Haugen's Bridal March was the merriest ever heard, so the bridal pair that it played to church, that were met by it again as they came from the altar, and that drove home with its strain in their ears, were the happiest couple that had ever been seen. And though the race of Tingvold had always been a handsome race, and after this were handsomer than ever, it is maintained that none, before or after, could equal this particular couple.

With Ole Haugen legend ends, and now history begins. Ole's Bridal March kept its place in the house of Tingvold. It was sung, and hummed, and whistled, and fiddled, in the house and in the stable, in the field and on the mountain-side. The only child born of the marriage, little Astrid, was rocked and sung to sleep with it by mother, by father, and by servants, and it was one of the first things she herself learned. There was music in the race, and this bright little one had her full share of it, and soon could hum her parents' triumphal march, the talisman of her family, in quite a masterly way.

It was hardly to be wondered at that when she grew up, she too wished to choose her lover. Many came to woo, but at the age of twenty-three the rich and gifted girl was still single. The reason came out at last. In the house lived a quick-witted youth, whom Aslaug had taken in out of pity. He went by the name of the tramp or gipsy, though he was neither. But Aslaug was ready enough to call him so when she heard that Astrid and he were betrothed. They had pledged faith to each other in all secrecy out on the hill pastures, and had sung the bridal march together, she on the height, he answering from below.

The lad was sent away at once. No one could now show more pride of race than Aslaug, the poor cottar's daughter. Astrid's father called to mind what was prophesied when he broke the tradition of his family. Had it now come to a husband being taken in from the wayside? Where would it end? And the neighbours said much the same.

"The tramp," Knut by name, soon became well known to everyone, as he took to dealing in cattle on his own account. He was the first in

that part of the country to do it to any extent, and his enterprise had begun to benefit the whole district, raising prices, and bringing in capital. But he was apt to bring drinking bouts, and often fighting, in his train; and this was all that people talked of as yet; they had not begun to understand his capabilities as a business man.

Astrid was determined, and she was twenty-three, and her parents came to see that either the farm must go out of the family or Knut must come into it; through their own marriage they had lost the moral authority that might have stood them in good stead now. So Astrid had her way. One fine day the handsome, merry Knut drove with her to church. The strains of the family bridal march, her grandfather's masterpiece, were wafted back over the great procession, and the two seemed to be sitting humming it quietly, and very happy they looked. And everyone wondered how the parents looked so happy too, for they had opposed the marriage long and obstinately.

After the wedding Knut took over the farm, and the old people retired on their allowance. It was such a liberal one that people could not understand how Knut and Astrid were able to afford it; for though the farm was the largest in the district, it was not well-cultivated. But this was not all. Three times the number of work-people were taken on, and everything was started in a new way, with an outlay unheard of in these parts. Certain ruin was foretold. But "the tramp" — for his nickname had stuck to him — was as merry as ever, and seemed to have infected Astrid with his humour. The quiet, gentle girl became the lively, buxom wife. Her parents were satisfied. At last people began to understand that Knut had brought to Tingvold what no one had had there before, working capital! And along with it he had brought the experience gained in trading, and a gift of handling commodities and money, and of keeping servants willing and happy.

In twelve years one would hardly have known Tingvold again. House and outbuildings were different; there were three times as many work-people, they were three times as well off, and Knut himself, in his broadcloth coat, sat in the evenings and smoked his meerschaum pipe and drank his glass of toddy with the Captain and the Pastor and the Bailiff. To Astrid he was the cleverest and best man in the world, and she was fond of telling how in his young days he had fought and drunk just to get himself talked about, and to frighten her; "for he was so cunning!"

She followed him in everything except in leaving off peasant dress and customs; to these she always kept. Knut did not interfere with other people's ways, so this caused no trouble between them. He lived with his "set," and his wife saw to their entertainment, which was, however, modest enough, for he was too prudent a man to make unnecessary show or outlay of any kind. Some said that he gained more by the card-playing, and by the popularity this mode of life won for him, than all he laid out upon it, but this was probably pure malevolence.

They had several children, but the only one whose history concerns us is the eldest son, Endrid, who was to inherit the farm and carry on the honour of the house. He had all the good looks of his race, but not much in the way of brains, as is often the case with children of specially active-minded parents. His father soon observed this, and tried to make up for it by giving him a very good education. A tutor was brought into the house for the children, and when Endrid grew up he was sent to one of the agricultural training schools that were now beginning to flourish in Norway, and after that to finish off in town. He came home again a quiet young fellow, with a rather over-burdened brain and fewer town ways than his father had hoped for. But Endrid was a slow-witted youth.

The Pastor and the Captain, both with large families of daughters, had their eye on him. But if this was the reason of the increased attention they paid to Knut, they made a great mistake; the idea of a marriage between his son and a poor pastor's or captain's daughter, with no training to fit her for a rich farmer's wife, was so ridiculous to him that he did not even think it necessary to warn Endrid. And indeed no warning was needed, for the lad saw as well as his father that, though there was no need for his bringing more wealth into the family through his marriage, it would be of advantage if he could again connect it with one of equal birth and position. But, as ill-luck would have it, he was but an awkward wooer. The worst of it was that he began to get the name of being a fortune-hunter; and when once a young man gets this reputation, the peasants fight shy of him. Endrid soon noticed this himself; for though he was not particularly quick, to make up for it he was very sensitive. He saw that it did not improve his position that he was dressed like a townsman, and "had learning," as the country people said. The boy was sound at heart, and the results of the slights he met with was that by degrees he left off his town dress and town speech, and began to work on his father's great farm as a simple labourer. His father understood — he had begun to understand before the lad did — and he told his wife to take no notice. So they said nothing about marriage, nor about the change in Endrid's ways; only his father was more and more friendly to him, and consulted him in everything connected with the farm and with his other trade, and at last gave the management of the farm altogether into his hands. And of this they never needed to repent.

So the time passed till Endrid was thirty-one. He had been steadily adding to his father's wealth and to his own experience and independence; but had never made the smallest attempt at courtship; had not looked at a girl, either in their own district or elsewhere. And now his parents were beginning to fear that he had given up thoughts of it altogether. But this was not the case.

On a neighbouring farm lived in good circumstances another well-descended peasant family, that had at different times intermarried with

the race of Tingvold. A girl was growing up there whom Endrid had been fond of since she was a little child; no doubt he had quietly set his heart on her, for only six months after her confirmation he spoke. She was seventeen then and he thirty-one. Randi, that was the girl's name, did not know at first what to answer; she consulted her parents, but they said she must decide for herself. He was a good man, and from a worldly point of view she could not make a better match, but the difference in their ages was great, and she must know herself if she had the courage to undertake the new duties and cares that would come upon her as mistress of the large farm. The girl felt that her parents would rather have her say Yes than No, but she was really afraid. She went to his mother, whom she had always liked, and found to her surprise that she knew nothing. But the mother was so delighted with the idea that with all her might she urged Randi to accept him. "I'll help you," she said. "Father will want no allowance from the farm. He has all he needs, and he doesn't wish his children to be longing for his death. Things will be divided at once, and the little that we keep to live on will be divided too when we are gone. So you see there will be no trouble with us." Yes, Randi knew all along that Knut and Astrid were kind and nice. "And the boy," said Astrid, "is good and thoughtful about everything." Yes, Randi had felt that too; she was not afraid but that she would get on with him — if she were only capable enough herself!

A few days later everything was settled. Endrid was happy, and so were his parents; for this was a much respected family that he was marrying into, and the girl was both nice-looking and clever; there was not a better match for him in the district. The parents on both sides consulted together, and settled that the wedding should be just before harvest, as there was nothing to wait for.

The neighbourhood generally did not look on the engagement in the same light as the parties concerned. It was said that the pretty young girl had "sold herself." She was so young and hardly knew what marriage was, and the sly Knut had pushed forward his son before any other lovers had the chance. Something of this came to Randi's ears, but Endrid was so loving to her, and in such a quiet, almost humble way, that she would not break off with him; only it made her a little cool. Both his and her parents heard what was said, but took no notice.

Perhaps just because of this talk they determined to hold the wedding in great style, and this, for the same reason, was not unacceptable to Randi. Knut's friends, the Pastor, the Captain, and the Bailiff, with their large families, were to be among the guests, and some of them were to accompany the pair to church. On their account Knut wanted to dispense with the fiddlers — it was too old fashioned and peasant-like. But Astrid insisted that they must be played to church and home again with the Bridal March of her race. It had made her and her husband so happy;

they could not but wish to hear it again on their dear children's great festival day. There was not much sentiment about Knut; but he let his wife have her way. The bride's parents got a hint that they might engage the fiddlers, who were asked to play the old March, the family Bridal March, that had lain quiet now for a time, because this generation had worked without song.

But alas! on the wedding day the rain poured hard. The players had to wrap up their fiddles as soon as they had played the bridal party away from the farm, and they did not take them out again till they came within sound of the church-bells. Then a boy had to stand up at the back of the cart and hold an umbrella over them, and below it they sat huddled together and sawed away. The March did not sound like itself in such weather, naturally enough, nor was it a very merry-looking bridal procession that followed. The bridegroom sat with the high bridegroom's hat between his legs and a sou'-wester on his head; he had on a great fur coat, and he held an umbrella over the bride, who, with one shawl on the top of another, to protect the bridal crown and the rest of her finery, looked more like a wet hayrick than a human being. On they came, carriage after carriage, the men dripping, the women hidden away under their wrappings. It looked like a sort of bewitched procession, in which one could not recognise a single face; for there was not a face to be seen, nothing but huddled-up heaps of wool or fur. A laugh broke out among the specially large crowd gathered at the church on account of the great wedding. At first it was stifled, but it grew louder with each carriage that drove up. At the large house where the procession was to alight and the dresses were to be arranged a little for going into church, a haycart had been drawn out of the way, into the corner formed by the porch. Mounted on it stood a pedlar, a joking fellow, Aslak by name. Just as the bride was lifted down he called: "Devil take me if Ole Haugen's Bridal March is any good today!"

He said no more, but that was plenty. The crowd laughed, and though many of them tried not to let it be seen that they were laughing, it was clearly felt what all were thinking and trying to hide.

When they took off the bride's shawls they saw that she was as white as a sheet. She began to cry, tried to laugh, cried again — and then all at once the feeling came over her that she could not go into the church. Amidst great excitement she was laid on a bed in a quiet room, for such a violent fit of crying had seized her that they were much alarmed. Her good parents stood beside the bed, and when she begged them to let her go back, they said that she might do just as she liked. Then her eyes fell on Endrid. Any one so utterly miserable and helpless she had never seen before; and beside him stood his mother, silent and motionless, with the tears running down her face and her eyes fixed on Randi's. Then Randi raised herself on her elbow and looked straight in front of her for a little,

still sobbing after the fit of crying. "No, no!" she said, "I'm going to church." Once more she lay back and cried for a little, and then she got up. She said that she would have no more music, so the fiddlers were dismissed — and the story did not lose in their telling when they got among the crowd.

It was a mournful bridal procession that now moved on towards the church. The rain allowed of the bride and bridegroom hiding their faces from the curiosity of the onlookers till they got inside; but they felt that they were running the gauntlet, and they felt too that their own friends were annoyed at being laughed at as part of such a foolish procession.

The grave of the famous fiddler, Ole Haugen, lay close by the church-door. Without saying much about it, the family had always tended it, and a new head-board had been put up when the old one had rotted away below. The upper part of it was in the shape of a wheel, as Ole himself had desired. The grave was in a sunny spot, and was thickly overgrown with wild flowers. Every churchgoer that had ever stood by it had heard from some one or other how a botanist in government pay, making a collection of the plants and flowers of the valley and the mountains round about, had found flowers on that grave that did not grow anywhere else in the neighbourhood. And the peasants, who as a rule cared little about what they called "weeds," took pride in these particular ones — a pride mixed with curiosity and even awe. Some of the flowers were remarkably beautiful. But as the bridal pair passed the grave, Endrid, who was holding Randi's hand, felt that she shivered; immediately she began to cry again, walked crying into the church, and was led crying to her place. No bride within the memory of man had made such an entrance into that church.

She felt as she sat there that all this was helping to confirm the report that she had been sold. The thought of the shame she was bringing on her parents made her turn cold, and for a little she was able to stop crying. But at the altar she was moved again by some word of the priest's, and immediately the thought of all she had gone through that day came over her; and for the moment she had the feeling that never, no, never again, could she look people in the face, and least of all her own father and mother.

Things got no better as the day went on. She was not able to sit with the guests at the dinner-table; in the evening she was half coaxed, half forced to appear at supper, but she spoiled every one's pleasure, and had to be taken away to bed. The wedding festivities, that were to have gone on for several days, ended that evening. It was given out that the bride was ill.

Though neither those who said this nor those who heard it believed it, it was only too true. She was really ill, and she did not soon recover. One consequence of this was that their first child was sickly. The parents were not the less devoted to it from understanding that they themselves were

to a certain extent the cause of its suffering. They never left that child. They never went to church, for they had got shy of people. For two years God gave them the joy of the child, and then He took it from them.

The first thought that struck them after this blow was that they had been too fond of their child. That was why they had lost it. So, when another came, it seemed as if neither of them dared to show their love for it. But this little one, though it too was sickly at first, grew stronger, and was so sweet and bright that they could not restrain their feelings. A new, pure happiness had come to them; they could almost forget all that had happened. When this child was two years old, God took it too.

Some people seem to be chosen out by sorrow. They are the very people that seem to us to need it least, but at the same time they are those that are best fitted to bear trials and yet to keep their faith. These two had early sought God together; after this they lived as it were in His presence. The life at Tingvold had long been a quiet one; now the house was like a church before the priest comes in. The work went on perfectly steadily, but at intervals during the day Endrid and Randi worshipped together, communing with those "on the other side." It made no change in their habits that Randi, soon after their last loss, had a little daughter. The children that were dead were boys, and this made them not care so much for a girl. Besides, they did not know if they were to be allowed to keep her. But the health and happiness that the mother had enjoyed up to the time of the death of the last little boy, had benefited this child, who soon showed herself to be a bright little girl, with her mother's pretty face. The two lonely people again felt the temptation to be hopeful and happy in their child; but the fateful two years were not over, and they dared not. As the time drew near, they felt as if they had only been allowed a respite.

Knut and Astrid kept a good deal to themselves. The way in which the young people had taken things did not allow of much sympathy or consolation being offered them. Besides, Knut was too lively and worldly-minded to sit long in a house of mourning or to be always coming in upon a prayer meeting. He moved to a small farm that he had bought and let, but now took back into his own hands. There he arranged everything so comfortably and nicely for his dear Astrid, that people whose intention it was to go to Tingvold, rather stayed and laughed with him than went on to cry with his children.

One day when Astrid was in her daughter-in-law's house, she noticed how little Mildrid went about quite alone; it seemed as if her mother hardly dared to touch her. When the father came in, she saw the same mournful sort of reserve towards his own, only child. She concealed her thoughts, but when she got home to her own dear Knut, she told him how things stood at Tingvold, and added: "Our place is there now. Little Mildrid needs some one that dares to love her; pretty, sweet little child

that she is!" Knut was infected by her eagerness, and the two old people packed up and went home.

Mildrid was now much with her grandparents, and they taught her parents to love her. When she was five years old her mother had another daughter, who was called Beret; and after this Mildrid lived almost altogether with the old people. The anxious parents began once more to feel as if there might yet be pleasure for them in life, and a change in the popular feeling towards them helped them.

After the loss of the second child, though there were often the traces of tears on their faces, no one had ever seen them weep — their grief was silent. There was no changing of servants at Tingvold, that was one result of the peaceful, God-fearing life there; nothing but praise of master and mistress was ever heard. They themselves knew this, and it gave them a feeling of comfort and security. Relations and friends began to visit them again; and went on doing so, even though the Tingvold people made no return.

But they had not been at church since their wedding-day! They partook of the Communion at home, and held worship there. But when the second girl was born, they were so desirous to be her godparents themselves that they made up their minds to venture. They stood together at their children's graves; they passed Ole Haugen's without word or movement; the whole congregation showed them respect. But they continued to keep themselves very much to themselves, and a pious peace rested over their house.

One day in her grandmother's house little Mildrid was heard singing the Bridal March. Old Astrid stopped her work in a fright, and asked her where in the world she had learned that. The child answered: "From you, grandmother." Knut, who was sitting in the house, laughed heartily, for he knew that Astrid had a habit of humming it when she sat at work. But they both said to little Mildrid that she must never sing it when her parents were within hearing. Like a child, she asked "Why?" But to this question she got no answer. One evening she heard the new herd-boy singing it as he was cutting wood. She told her grandmother, who had heard it too. All grandmother said was: "He'll not grow old here!" — and sure enough he had to go next day. No reason was given; he got his wages and was sent about his business. Mildrid was so excited about this, that grandmother had to try to tell her the story of the Bridal March. The little eight year old girl understood it well enough, and what she did not understand then became clear to her later. It had an influence on her child-life, and especially her conduct towards her parents, that nothing else had or could have had.

She had always noticed that they liked quietness. It was no hardship to her to please them in this; they were so gentle, and talked so much and so sweetly to her of the children's great Friend in heaven, that it cast

a sort of charm over the whole house. The story of the Bridal March affected her deeply, and gave her an understanding of all that they had gone through. She carefully avoided recalling to them any painful memories, and showed them the tenderest affection, sharing with them their love of God, their truthfulness, their quietness, their industry. And she taught Beret to do the same.

In their grandfather's house the life that had to be suppressed at home got leave to expand. Here there was singing and dancing and play and story-telling. So the sisters' young days passed between devotion to their melancholy parents in the quiet house, and the glad life they were allowed to take part in at their grandfather's. The families lived in perfect understanding. It was the parents who told them to go to the old people and enjoy themselves, and the old people who told them to go back again, "and be sure to be good girls."

When a girl between the age of twelve and sixteen takes a sister between seven and eleven into her full confidence, the confidence is rewarded by great devotion. But the little one is apt to become too old for her years. This happened with Beret, while Mildrid only gained by being forbearing and kind and sympathetic — and she made her parents and grandparents happy.

There is no more to tell till Mildrid was in her fifteenth year; then old Knut died, suddenly and easily. There seemed almost no time between the day when he sat joking in the chimney-corner and the day when he lay in his coffin.

After this, grandmother's greatest pleasure was to have Mildrid sitting on a stool at her feet, as she had done ever since she was a little child, and to tell her stories about Knut, or else to get her to hum the Bridal March. As Astrid sat listening to it, she saw Knut's handsome dark head as she used to see it in her young days; she followed him out to the mountain-side, where he blew the March on his herd-boy's horn, she drove to church by his side — all his brightness and cleverness lived again for her!

But in Mildrid's soul a new feeling began to stir. Whilst she sat and sang for grandmother, she asked herself: "Will it ever be played for me?" The thought grew upon her, the March spoke to her of such radiant happiness. She saw a bride's crown glittering in the sunshine, and a long, bright future beyond that. Sixteen — and she asked herself: "Shall I, shall I ever have some one sitting beside me, with the Bridal March shining in his eyes? Only think, if father and mother were one day to drive with me in such a procession, with the people greeting us on every side, on to the house where mother was jeered at that day, past Ole Haugen's flower-covered grave, up to the altar, in a glory of happiness! Think what it would be if I could give father and mother that consolation!" And the child's heart swelled, imagining all this to herself, swelled with pride and with devotion to those dear parents who had suffered so much.

These were the first thoughts that she did not confide to Beret. Soon there were more. Beret, who was now eleven, noticed that she was left more to herself, but did not understand that she was being gradually shut out from Mildrid's confidence, till she saw another taken into her place. This was Inga, from the neighbouring farm, a girl of eighteen, their own cousin, newly betrothed. When Mildrid and Inga walked about in the fields, whispering and laughing, with their arms round each other, as girls love to go, poor Beret would throw herself down and cry with jealousy.

The time came on for Mildrid to be confirmed; she made acquaintance with other young people of her own age, and some of them began to come up to Tingvold on Sundays. Mildrid saw them either out of doors or in her grandmother's room. Tingvold had always been a forbidden, and consequently mysteriously attractive place to young people. But even now, only those with a certain quietness and seriousness of disposition went there, for it could not be denied that there was something subdued about Mildrid, that did not attract every one.

At this particular time there was a great deal of music and singing among the youths of the district. For some reason or other there are such periods, and these periods have their leaders. One of the leaders now was, curiously enough, again of the race of Haugen.

Amongst a people where once on a time, even though it were hundreds of years ago, almost every man and woman sought and found expression for their intensest feelings and experiences in song, and were able themselves to make the verses that gave them relief — amongst such a people the art can never quite die out. Here and there, even though it does not make itself heard, it must exist, ready on occasion to be awakened to new life. But in this district songs had been made and sung from time immemorial. It was by no mere chance that Ole Haugen was born here, and here became what he was. Now it was his grandson in whom the gift had reappeared.

Ole's son had been so much younger than the daughter who had married in the Tingvold family, that the latter, already a married woman, had stood godmother to her little brother. After a life full of changes, this son, as an old man, had come into possession of his father's home and little bit of land far up on the mountain-side; and, strangely enough, not till then did he marry. He had several children, among them a boy called Hans, who seemed to have inherited his grandfather's gifts — not exactly in the way of fiddle-playing, though he did play — but he sang the old songs beautifully and made new ones himself. People's appreciation of his songs was not a little added to by the fact that so few knew himself; there were not many that had even seen him. His old father had been a hunter, and while the boys were quite small, the old man took them out to the hillside and taught them to load and aim a gun. They always remembered how pleased he was when they were able to earn enough with

their shooting to pay for their own powder and shot. He did not live long after this, and soon after his death their mother died too, and the children were left to take care of themselves, which they managed to do. The boys hunted and the girls looked after the little hill farm. People turned to look at them when they once in a way showed themselves in the valley; they were so seldom there. It was a long, bad road down. In winter they occasionally came to sell or send off the produce of their hunting; in summer they were busy with the strangers. Their little holding was the highest lying in the district, and it became famed for having that pure mountain air which cures people suffering from their lungs or nerves, better than any yet discovered medicine; every year they had as many summer visitors, from town, and even from abroad, as they could accommodate. They added several rooms to their house, and still it was always full. So these brothers and sisters, from being poor, very poor, came to be quite well-to-do. Intercourse with so many strangers had made them a little different from the other country people — they even knew something of foreign languages. Hans was now twenty-seven. Some years before he had bought up his brothers' and sisters' shares, so that the whole place belonged to him.

Not one of the family had ever set foot in the house of their relations at Tingvold. Endrid and Randi Tingvold, though they had doubtless never put the feeling into words, could just as little bear to hear the name of Haugen as to hear the Bridal March. These children's poor father had been made to feel this, and in consequence, Hans had forbidden his brothers and sisters ever to go to the house. But the girls at Tingvold, who loved music, longed to make acquaintance with Hans, and when they and their girl friends were together, they talked more about the family at Haugen than about anything else. Hans's songs and tunes were sung and danced to, and they were for ever planning how they could manage to meet the young farmer of Haugen.

After this happy time of young companionship came Mildrid's confirmation. Just before it there was a quiet pause, and after it came another. Mildred, now about seventeen, spent the autumn almost alone with her parents. In spring, or rather summer, she was, like all the other girls after their confirmation, to go to the sœter in charge of cattle. She was delighted at the thought of this, especially as her friend Inga was to be at the next sœter.

At last her longing for the time to come grew so strong that she had no peace at home, and Beret, who was to acccompany her, grew restless too. When they got settled in the sœter Beret was quite absorbed in the new, strange life, but Mildrid was still restless. She had her busy times with the cattle and the milk, but there were long idle hours that she did not know how to dispose of. Some days she spent them with Inga, listening to her stories of her lover, but often she had no inclination to go

there. She was glad when Inga came to her, and affectionate, as if she wanted to make up for her faithlessness. She seldom talked to Beret, and often when Beret talked to her, answered nothing but Yes or No. When Inga came, Beret took herself off, and when Mildred went to see Inga, Beret went crying away after the cows, and had the herd-boys for company. Mildrid felt that there was something wrong in all this, but with the best will she could not set it right.

She was sitting one day near the sœter, herding the goats and sheep, because one of the herd-boys had played truant and she had to do his work. It was a warm midday; she was sitting in the shade of a hillock overgrown with birch and underwood; she had thrown off her jacket and taken her knitting in her hand, and was expecting Inga. Something rustled behind her. "There she comes," thought Mildred, and looked up.

But there was more noise than Inga was likely to make, and such a breaking and cracking among the bushes. Mildrid turned pale, got up, and saw something hairy and a pair of eyes below it — it must be a bear's head! She wanted to scream, but no voice would come; she wanted to run, but could not stir. The thing raised itself up — it was a tall, broad-shouldered man with a fur cap, a gun in his hand. He stopped short among the bushes and looked at her sharply for a second or two, then took a step forward, a jump, and stood in the field beside her. Something moved at her feet, and she gave a little cry; it was his dog, that she had not seen before.

"Oh dear!" she said; "I thought it was a bear breaking through the bushes, and I got such a fright!" And she tried to laugh.

"Well, it might almost have been that," said he, speaking in a very quiet voice; "Kvas and I were on the track of a bear; but now we have lost it; and if I have a 'Vardöger,' it is certainly a bear."

He smiled. She looked at him. Who can he be? Tall, broad-shouldered, wiry; his eyes restless, so that she could not see them rightly; besides, she was standing quite close to him, just where he had suddenly appeared before her with his dog and his gun.

She felt the inclination to say, "Go away!" but instead she drew back a few steps, and asked: "Who are you?" She was really frightened.

"Hans Haugen," answered the man rather absently: for he was paying attention to the dog, which seemed to have found the track of the bear again. He was just going to add, "Good-bye!" but when he looked at her she was blushing; cheeks, neck, and bosom crimson.

"What's the matter?" said he, astonished.

She did not know what to do or where to go, whether to run away or sit down.

"Who are you?" asked Hans in his turn.

Once again she turned crimson, for to tell him her name was to tell him everything.

"Who are you?" he repeated, as if it were the most natural question in the world, and deserved an answer.

And she could not refuse the answer, though she felt ashamed of herself, and ashamed of her parents, who had neglected their own kindred. The name had to be said. "Mildrid Tingvold," she whispered, and burst into tears.

It was true enough; the Tingvold people had given him little reason to care for them. Of his own free will he would scarcely have spoken to one of them. But he had never foreseen anything like this, and he looked at the girl in amazement. He seemed to remember some story of her mother having cried like that in church on her wedding-day. "Perhaps it's in the family," he thought, and turned to go. "Forgive me for having frightened you," he said, and took his way up the hillside after his dog.

By the time she ventured to look up he had just reached the top of the ridge, and there he turned to look at her. It was only for an instant, for at that moment the dog barked on the other side. Hans gave a start, held his gun in readiness, and hurried on. Mildrid was still gazing at the place where he had stood, when a shot startled her. Could that be the bear? Could it have been so near her?

Off she went, climbing where he had just climbed, till she stood where he had stood, shading her eyes with her hand, and — sure enough, there he was, half hidden by a bush, on his knees beside a huge bear! Before she knew what she was doing, she was down beside him. He gave her a smile of welcome, and explained to her, in his low voice, how it had happened that they had lost the track and the dog had not scented the animal till they were almost upon it. By this time she had forgotten her tears and her bashfulness, and he had drawn his knife to skin the bear on the spot. The flesh was of no value at this time; he meant to bury the carcass and take only the skin. So she held, and he skinned; then she ran down to the sœter for an axe and a spade; and although she still felt afraid of the bear, and it had a bad smell, she kept on helping him till all was finished. By this time it was long past twelve o'clock, and he invited himself to dinner at the sœter. He washed himself and the skin, no small piece of work, and then came in and sat beside her while she finished preparing the food.

He chatted about one thing and another, easily and pleasantly, in the low voice that seems to become natural to people who are much alone. Mildrid gave the shortest answers possible, and when it came to sitting opposite him at the table, she could neither speak nor eat, and there was often silence between them. When she had finished he turned round his chair and filled and lit his pipe. He too was quieter now, and presently he got up. "I must be going," he said, holding out his hand, "it's a long way home from here." Then added, in a still lower voice: "Do you sit every day where you were to-day?" He held her hand for a moment, expecting an answer; but she dared not look up, much less speak. Then she felt him

press her hand quickly. "Good-bye, then, and thank you!" he said in a louder tone, and before she could collect herself, she saw him, with the bearskin over his shoulder, the gun in his hand, and the dog at his side, striding away over the heather. There was a dip in the hills just there, and she saw him clear against the sky; his light, firm step taking him quickly away. She watched till he was out of sight, then came outside and sat down, still looking in the same direction.

Not till now was she aware that her heart was beating so violently that she had to press her hands over it. In a minute or two she lay down on the grass, leaning her head on her arm, and began to go carefully over every event of the day. She saw him start up among the bushes and stand before her, strong and active, looking restlessly round. She felt over again the bewilderment and the fright, and her tears of shame. She saw him against the sun, on the height; she heard the shot, and was again on her knees before him, helping him with the skinning of the bear. She heard once more every word that he said, in that low voice that sounded so friendly, and that touched her heart as she thought of it; she listened to it as he sat beside the hearth while she was cooking, and then at table with her. She felt that she had no longer dared to look into his face, so that at last she had made him feel awkward too; for he had grown silent. Then she heard him speak once again, as he took her hand; and she felt his clasp — felt it still, through her whole body. She saw him go away over the heather — away, away!

Would he ever come back? Impossible, after the way she had behaved. How strong, and brave, and self-reliant was everything she had seen of him, and how stupid and miserable all that he had seen of her, from her first scream of fright when the dog touched her, to her blush of shame and her tears; from the clumsy help she gave him, to her slowness in preparing the food. And to think that when he looked at her she was not able to speak; not even to say No, when he asked her if she sat under the hill every day — for she didn't sit there every day! Might not her silence then have seemed like an invitation to him to come and see? Might not her whole miserable helplessness have been misunderstood in the same way? What shame she felt now! She was hot all over with it, and she buried her burning face deeper and deeper in the grass. Then she called up the whole picture once more! all his excellences and her shortcomings; and again the shame of it all overwhelmed her.

She was still lying there when the sound of the bells told her that the cattle were coming home; then she jumped up and began to work. Beret saw as soon as she came that something had happened. Mildrid asked such stupid questions and gave such absurd answers, and altogether behaved in such an extraordinary way, that she several times just stopped and stared at her. When it came to supper-time, and Mildrid, instead of taking her place at the table, went and sat down outside, saying that she had just

had dinner, Beret was as intensely on the alert as a dog who scents game at hand. She took her supper and went to bed. The sisters slept in the same bed, and, as Mildrid did not come, Beret got up softly once or twice to look if her sister were still sitting out there, and if she were alone. Yes, she was there, and alone.

Eleven o'clock, and then twelve, and then one, and still Mildrid sat and Beret waked. She pretended to be asleep when Mildrid came at last, and Mildrid moved softly, so softly; but her sister heard her sobbing, and when she had got into bed she heard her say her usual evening prayer so sadly, heard her whisper: "O God, help me, help me!" It made Beret so unhappy that she could not get to sleep even now. She felt her sister restlessly changing from one position to another; she saw her at last giving it up, throwing aside the covering, and lying open-eyed, with her hands below her head, staring into vacancy. She saw and heard no more, for at last she fell asleep.

When she awoke next morning Mildred's place was empty. Beret jumped up; the sun was high in the sky; the cattle were away long ago. She found her breakfast set ready, took it hurriedly, and went out and saw Mildrid at work, but looking ill. Beret said that she was going to hurry after the cattle. Mildrid said nothing in answer, but gave her a glance as though of thanks. The younger girl stood a minute thinking, and then went off.

Mildrid looked round; yes, she was alone. She hastily put away the dishes, leaving everything else as it was. Then she washed herself and changed her dress, took her knitting, and set off up the hill.

She had not the new strength of the new day, for she had hardly slept or eaten anything for twenty-four hours. She walked in a dream, and knew nothing clearly till she was at the place where she had sat yesterday.

Hardly had she seated herself when she thought: "If he were to come and find me here, he would believe ——" She started up mechanically. There was his dog on the hillside. It stood still and looked at her, then rushed down to her, wagging its tail. Her heart stopped beating. There — there he stood, with his gun gleaming in the sun, just as he had stood yesterday. To-day he had come another way. He smiled to her, ran down, and stood before her. She had given a little scream and sunk down on the grass again. It was more than she could do to stand up; she let her knitting drop, and put her hands up to her face. He did not say a word. He lay down on the grass in front of her, and looked up at her, the dog at his side with its eyes fixed on him. She felt that though she was turning her head away, he could see her hot blush, her eyes, her whole face. She heard him breathing quickly; she thought she felt his breath on her hand. She did not want him to speak, and yet his silence was dreadful. She knew that he must understand why she was sitting there; and greater shame than this no one had ever felt. But it was not right of him, either, to have come, and still worse of him to be lying there.

Then she felt him take one of her hands and hold it tight, then the other, so that she had to turn a little that way; he drew her gently, but strongly and firmly towards him with eye and hand, till she was at his side, her head fallen on his shoulder. She felt him stroke her hair with one hand, but she dared not look up. Presently she broke into passionate weeping at the thought of her shameful behaviour.

"Yes, you may cry," said he, "but I will laugh; what has happened to us two is matter both for laughter and for tears."

His voice shook. And now he bent over her and whispered that the farther away he went from her yesterday the nearer he seemed to be to her. The feeling overmastered him so, that when he reached his little shooting cabin, where he had a German officer with him this summer, recruiting after the war, he left the guest to take care of himself, and wandered farther up the mountain. He spent the night on the heights, sometimes sitting, sometimes wandering about. He went home to breakfast, but away again immediately. He was twenty-eight now, no longer a boy, and he felt that either this girl must be his or it would go badly with him. He wandered to the place where they had met yesterday; he did not expect that she would be there again; but when he saw her, he felt that he must make the venture; and when he came to see that she was feeling just as he was — "Why, then" — and he raised her head gently. And she had stopped crying, and his eyes shone so that she had to look into them, and then she turned red and put her head down again.

He went on talking in his low, half-whispering voice. The sun shone through the treetops, the birches trembled in the breeze, the birds mingled their song with the sound of a little stream rippling over its stony bed.

How long the two sat there together, neither of them knew. At last the dog startled them. He had made several excursions, and each time had come back and lain down beside them again; but now he ran barking down the hill. They both jumped up and stood for a minute listening. But nothing appeared. Then they looked at each other again, and Hans lifted her up in his arms. She had not been lifted like this since she was a child, and there was something about it that made her feel helpless. When he looked up beaming into her face, she bent and put her arms round his neck — he was now her strength, her future, her happiness, her life itself — she resisted no longer.

Nothing was said. He held her tight; she clung to him. He carried her to the place where she had sat at first, and sat down there with her on his knee. She did not unloose her arms, she only bent her head close down to his so as to hide her face from him. He was just going to force her to let him look into it, when some one right in front of them called in a voice of astonishment: "Mildrid!"

It was Inga, who had come up after the dog. Mildrid sprang to her feet, looked at her friend for an instant, then went up to her, put one arm

round her neck, and laid her head on her shoulder. Inga put her arm round Mildrid's waist. "Who is he?" she whispered, and Mildrid felt her tremble, but said nothing. Inga knew who he was — knew him quite well — but could not believe her own eyes. Then Hans came slowly forward. "I thought you knew me," he said quietly; "I am Hans Haugen." When she heard his voice, Mildrid lifted her head. How good and true he looked as he stood there! He held out his hand; she went forward and took it, and looked at her friend with a flush of mingled shame and joy.

Then Hans took his gun and said good-bye, whispering to Mildrid: "You may be sure I'll come soon again!"

The girls walked with him as far as the sœter, and watched him, as Mildrid had done yesterday, striding away over the heather in the sunlight. They stood as long as they could see him; Mildrid, who was leaning on Inga, would not let her go; Inga felt that she did not want her to move or speak. From time to time one or the other whispered: "He's looking back!" When he was out of sight Mildrid turned round to Inga and said: "Don't ask me anything. I can't tell you about it!" She held her tight for a second, and then they walked towards the sœter-house. Mildrid remembered now how she had left all her work undone. Inga helped her with it. They spoke very little, and only about the work. Just once Mildrid stopped, and whispered: "Isn't he handsome?"

She set out some dinner, but could eat little herself, though she felt the need both of food and sleep. Inga left as soon as she could, for she saw that Mildrid would rather be alone. Then Mildrid lay down on her bed. She was lying, half asleep already, thinking over the events of the morning, and trying to remember the nicest things that Hans had said, when it suddenly occurred to her to ask herself what she had answered. Then it flashed upon her that during their whole meeting she had not spoken, not said a single word!

She sat up in bed and said to herself: "He could not have gone far till this must have struck him too — and what can he have thought? He must take me for a creature without a will, going about in a dream. How can he go on caring for me? Yesterday it was not till he had gone away from me that he found out he cared for me at all — what will he find out today?" she asked herself with a shiver of dread. She got up, went out, and sat down where she had sat so long yesterday.

All her life Mildrid had been accustomed to take herself to account for her behaviour; circumstances had obliged her to walk carefully. Now, thinking over what had happened these last two days, it struck her forcibly that she had behaved without tact, without thought, almost without modesty. She had never read or heard about anything happening like this; she looked at it from the peasant's point of view, and none take these matters more strictly than they. It is seemly to control one's feelings — it is honourable to be slow to show them. She, who had done this all her life,

and consequently been respected by every one, had in one day given herself to a man she had never seen before! Why, he himself must be the first to despise her! It showed how bad things were, that she dared not tell what had happened, not even to Inga!

With the first sound of the cow-bells in the distance came Beret, to find her sister on the bench in front of the sœter-house, looking half dead. Beret stood in front of her till she was forced to raise her head and look at her. Mildrid's eyes were red with crying, and her whole expression was one of suffering. But it changed to surprise when she saw Beret's face, which was scarlet with excitement.

"Whatever is the matter with you?" she exclaimed.

"Nothing!" answered Beret, standing staring fixedly at Mildrid, who at last looked away, and got up to go and attend to the cows.

The sisters did not meet again till supper, when they sat opposite to each other. Mildrid was not able to eat more than a few mouthfuls. She sat and looked absently at the others, oftenest at Beret, who ate on steadily, gulping down her food like a hungry dog.

"Have you had nothing to eat to-day?" asked Mildrid.

"No!" answered Beret, and ate on.

Presently Mildrid spoke again: "Have you not been with the herds then?"

"No!" answered her sister and both of the boys. Before them Mildrid would not ask more, and afterwards her own morbid reflections took possession of her again, and along with them the feeling that she was no fit person to be in charge of Beret. This was one more added to the reproaches she made to herself all that long summer evening and far into the night.

There she sat, on the bench by the door, till the blood-red clouds changed gradually to cold grey, no peace and no desire for sleep coming to her. The poor child had never before been in real distress. Oh, how she prayed! She stopped and she began again; she repeated prayers that she had learned, and she made up petitions of her own. At last, utterly exhausted, she went to bed.

There she tried once more to collect her thoughts for a final struggle with the terrible question, Should she give him up or not? But she had no strength left; she could only say over and over again: "Help me, O God! help me!" She went on like this for a long time, sometimes saying it to herself, sometimes out loud. All at once she got such a fright that she gave a loud scream. Beret was kneeling up in bed looking at her; her sparkling eyes, hot face, and short breathing showing a terrible state of excitement.

"Who is he?" she whispered, almost threateningly.

Mildrid, crushed by her self-torture, and worn out in soul and body, could not answer; she began to cry.

"Who is he?" repeated the other, closer to her face; "you needn't try to hide it any longer; I was watching you to-day the whole time!"

Mildrid held up her arms as if to defend herself, but Beret beat them back, looked straight into her eyes, and again repeated, "Who is he, I say?"

"Beret, Beret!" moaned Mildrid; "have I ever been anything but kind to you since you were a little child? Why are you so cruel to me now that I am in trouble?"

Then Beret, moved by her tears, let go her arms; but her short hard breathing still betrayed her excitement. "Is it Hans Haugen?" she whispered.

There was a moment of breathless suspense, and then Mildrid whispered back: "Yes" —— and began to cry again.

Beret drew down her arms once more; she wanted to see her face. "Why did you not tell me about it, Mildrid?" she asked, with the same fierce eagerness.

"Beret, I didn't know it myself. I never saw him till yesterday. And as soon as I saw him I loved him, and let him see it, and that is what is making me so unhappy, so unhappy that I feel as if I must die of it!"

"You never saw him before yesterday?" screamed Beret, so astonished that she could hardly believe it.

"Never in my life!" replied Mildrid. "Isn't it shameful, Beret?"

But Beret threw her arms round her sister's neck, and kissed her over and over again.

"Dear, sweet Mildred, I'm so glad!" she whispered, now radiant with joy. "I'm so glad, so glad!" and she kissed her once more. "And you'll see how I can keep a secret, Mildrid!" She hugged her to her breast, but sat up again, and said sorrowfully: "And you thought I couldn't do it; O Mildrid! not even when it was about you!"

And now it was Beret's turn to cry. "Why have you put me away? Why have you taken Inga instead of me? You've made me dreadfully unhappy, Mildrid! O Mildrid, you don't know how I love you!" and she clung to her. Then Mildred kissed her, and told her that she had done it without thinking what she was doing, but that now she would never again put her aside, and would tell her everything, because she was so good and true and faithful.

The sisters lay for a little with their arms round each other; then Beret sat up again; she wanted to look into her sister's face in the light of the summer night, that was gradually taking a tinge of red from the coming dawn. Then she burst out with: "Mildrid, how handsome he is! How did he come? How did you see him first? What did he say? Do tell me about it!"

And Mildrid now poured out to her sister all that a few hours ago it had seemed to her she could never tell to anybody. She was sometimes

interrupted by Beret's throwing her arms round her and hugging her, but she went on again with all the more pleasure. It seemed to her like a strange legend of the woods. They laughed and they cried. Sleep had gone from them both. The sun found them still entranced by this wonderful tale — Mildrid lying down or resting on one elbow and talking, Beret kneeling beside her, her mouth half open, her eyes sparkling, from time to time giving a little cry of delight.

They got up together and did their work together, and when they had finished, and for the sake of appearances taken a little breakfast, they prepared for the meeting with Hans. He was sure to come soon! They dressed themselves out in their best, and went up to Mildrid's place on the hill. Beret showed where she had lain hidden yesterday. The dog had found her out, she said, and paid her several visits. The weather was fine to-day too, though there were some clouds in the sky. The girls found plenty to say to each other, till it was about the time when Hans might be expected. Beret ran once or twice up to the top of the hill, to see if he were in sight, but there was no sign of him. Then they began to grow impatient, and at last Mildrid got so excited that Beret was frightened. She tried to soothe her by reminding her that Hans was not his own master; that he had left the German gentleman two whole days to fish and shoot alone, and prepare food for himself; and that he would hardly dare to leave him a third. And Mildred acknowledged that this might be so.

"What do you think father and mother will say to all this?" asked Beret, just to divert Mildrid's thoughts. She repented the moment the words were uttered. Mildrid turned pale and stared at Beret, who stared back at her. Beret wondered if her sister had never thought of this till now, and said so. Yes; she had thought of it, but as of something very far off. The fear of what Hans Haugen might think of her, the shame of her own weakness and stupidity, had so occupied her mind that they had left no room for anything else. But now things suddenly changed round, and she could think of nothing but her parents.

Beret again tried to comfort her. Whenever father and mother saw Hans, they would feel that Mildrid was right — they would never make her unhappy who had given them their greatest happiness. Grandmother would help her. No one could say a word against Hans Haugen, and *he* would never give her up! Mildrid heard all this, but did not take it in, for she was thinking of something else, and to get time to think it out rightly, she asked Beret to go and prepare the dinner. And Beret walked slowly away, looking back several times.

Mildrid wanted to be left alone a little to make up her mind whether she should go at once and tell her parents. It seemed a terrible matter to her in her excited, exhausted state. She felt now that it would be a sin if she saw Hans again without their knowledge. She had done very

wrong in engaging herself to him without having their consent; but she had been in a manner surprised into that; it had come about almost without her will. Her duty now, though, was clearly to go and tell them.

She rose to her feet, with a new light in her eyes. She would do what was right. Before Hans stood there again, her parents should know all. "That's it!" she said, aloud, as if some one were there, and then hurried down to the sœter to tell Beret. But Beret was nowhere to be seen. "Beret! Beret!" shouted Mildrid, but only the echoes gave answer. Excited Mildrid was already, but now she got frightened too. Beret's great eyes, as she asked: "What do you think father and mother will say to this?" seemed to grow ever greater and more threatening. Surely *she* could never have gone off to tell them? Yet it would be just like her hasty way to think she would settle the thing at once, and bring comfort to her sister. To be sure that was it! And if Beret reached home before her, father and mother would get a wrong idea of everything!

Off Mildrid went, down the road that led to the valley. She walked unconsciously faster and faster, carried away by ever-increasing excitement; till her head began to turn and her breathing to get oppressed. She had to sit down for a rest. Sitting did not seem to help her, so she stretched herself out, resting her head on her arm, and lay there, feeling forsaken, helpless, almost betrayed — by affection it was true — but still betrayed.

In a few moments she was asleep! For two days and nights she had hardly slept or eaten; and she had no idea of the effect this had had on her mind and body — the child who till now had eaten and slept so regularly and peacefully in her quiet home. How was it possible that she could understand anything at all of what had happened to her? All that she had been able to give to her affectionate but melancholy parents out of her heart's rich store of love, was a kind of watchful care; in her grandmother's brighter home longings for something more had often come over her, but there was nothing even there to satisfy them. So now when love's full spring burst upon her, she stood amidst its rain of blossoms frightened and ashamed.

Tormented by her innocent conscience, the poor tired child had to run a race with herself till she fell — now she slept, caressed by the pure mountain breeze.

Beret had not gone home, but away to fetch Hans Haugen. She had far to go, and most of the way was unknown to her. It went first by the edge of a wood, and then higher over bare flats, not quite safe from wild animals, which she knew had been seen there lately. But she went on for Hans really must come. If he did not, she was sure things would go badly with Mildrid; she seemed so changed to-day.

In spite of her anxiety about Mildrid, Beret's heart was light, and she stepped merrily on, her thoughts running all the time on this wonderful

adventure. She could think of no one better or grander than Hans Haugen, and none but the very best was good enough for Mildrid. There was nothing whatever to be surprised at in Mildrid's giving herself up to him at once; just as little as in his at once falling in love with her. If father and mother could not be brought to understand this, they must just be left to do as they chose, and the two must fight their own battle as her great-grandparents had done, and her grandparents too — and she began to sing the old Bridal March. Its joyful tones sounded far over the bare heights and seemed to die away among the clouds.

When she got right on the top of the hill she was crossing, she stood and shouted "Hurrah!" From here she could see only the last strip of cultivated land on the farther side of their valley; and on this side the upper margin of the forest, above it stretches of heather, and where she stood, nothing but boulders and flat rocks. She flew from stone to stone in the light air. She knew that Hans's hut lay in the direction of the snow mountain whose top stood out above all the others, and presently she thought that she must be getting near it. To get a better look around she climbed up on to an enormous stone, and from the top of it she saw a mountain lake just below. Whether it was a rock or a hut she saw by the water's edge she could not be sure; one minute it looked like a hut, the next like a big stone. But she knew that his cabin lay by a mountain lake. Yes, that must be it, for there came a boat rowing round the point. Two men were in the boat — they must be Hans and the German officer. Down she jumped and off again. But what had looked so near was really far off, and she ran and ran, excited by the thought of meeting Hans Haugen.

Hans sat quietly in his boat with the German, ignorant of all the disturbance he had caused. *He* had never known what it was to be frightened; nor had he ever till now known the feeling of being in love. As soon as he did feel it, it was intolerable to him until he had settled the matter. Now it was settled, and he was sitting there setting words to the Bridal March!

He was not much of a poet, but he made out something about their ride to church, and the refrain of every verse told of their meeting in the wood. He whistled and fished and felt very happy; and the German fished away quietly and left him in peace.

A halloo sounded from the shore, and both he and the bearded German looked up and saw a girl waving. They exchanged a few words and rowed ashore. Hans jumped out and tied up the boat; and they lifted out the guns, coats, fish, and fishing tackle; the German went away towards the cabin, but Hans with his load came up to Beret, who was standing on a stone a little way off.

"Who are you?" he asked gently.

"Beret, Mildrid's sister," she answered, blushing, and he blushed too. But the next moment he turned pale.

"Is there anything the matter?"

"No! just that you must come. She can't bear to be left alone just now."

He stood a minute and looked at her, then turned and went towards the hut. The German was standing outside, hanging up his fishing tackle; Hans hung up his, and they spoke together, and then went in. Ever since Beret's halloo, two dogs, shut up in the cabin, had been barking with all their might. When the men opened the door they burst out, but were at once sternly called back. It was some time before Hans came out again. He had changed his clothes, and had his gun and dog with him. The German gentleman came to the door, and they shook hands as if saying good-bye for a considerable time. Hans came up quickly to Beret.

"Can you walk fast?" he asked.

"Of course I can."

And off they went, she running, the dog far ahead.

Beret's message had entirely changed the current of Hans's thoughts. It had never occurred to him before that Mildrid might not have the same happy, sure feeling about their engagement that he had. But now he saw how natural it was that she should be uneasy about her parents; and how natural, too, that she should feel alarmed by the hurried rush in which everything had come about. He understood it so well now that he was perfectly astonished at himself for not having thought of it before — and on he strode.

Even on him the suddenness of the meeting with Mildrid, and the violence of their feelings, had at first made a strange impression; what must she, a child, knowing nothing but the quiet reserve of her parents' house, have felt, thus launched suddenly on the stormy sea of passion! — and on he strode.

While he was marching along, lost in these reflections, Beret was trotting at his side, always, when she could, with her face turned towards his. Now and then he had caught a glimpse of her big eyes and flaming cheeks; but his thoughts were like a veil over his sight; he saw her indistinctly, and then suddenly not at all. He turned round; she was a good way behind, toiling after him as hard as she could. She had been too proud to say that she could not keep up with him any longer. He stood and waited till she made up to him, breathless, with tears in her eyes. "Ah! I'm walking too fast," and he held out his hand. She was panting so that she could not answer. "Let us sit down a little," he said, drawing her to him; "Come!" and he made her sit close to him. If possible she got redder than before, and did not look at him; and she drew breath so painfully that it seemed as if she were almost choking. "I'm so thirsty!" was the first thing she managed to say. They rose and he looked round, but there was no stream near. "We must wait till we get a little farther on," he said; "and anyhow it wouldn't be good for you to drink just now."

So they sat down again, she on a stone in front of him.

"I ran the whole way," she said, as if to excuse herself — and presently added, "and I have had no dinner," and after another pause — "and I didn't sleep last night."

Instead of expressing any sympathy with her, he asked sharply: "Then I suppose Mildrid did not sleep last night either? And she has not eaten, I saw that myself, not for" — he thought a little — "not for ever so long."

He rose. "Can you go on now?"

"I think so."

He took her hand, and they set off again at a tremendous pace. Soon he saw that she could not keep it up, so he took off his coat, gave it to her to hold, and lifted her up and carried her. She did not want him to do it, but he just went easily off with her, and Beret held on by his neckerchief, for she dared not touch him. Soon she said that she had got her breath and could run quite well again, so he put her down, took his coat and hung it over his gun — and off they went! When they came to a stream they stopped and rested a little before she took a drink. As she got up he gave her a friendly smile, and said: "You're a good little one."

Evening was coming on when they reached the sœter. They looked in vain for Mildrid, both there and at her place on the hillside. Their calls died away in the distance, and when Hans noticed the dog standing snuffing at something they felt quite alarmed. They ran to look — it was her little shawl. At once Hans set the dog to seek the owner of the shawl. He sprang off, and they after him, across the hill and down on the other side, towards Tingvold. Could she have gone home? Beret told of her own thoughtless question and its consequences, and Hans said he saw it all. Beret began to cry.

"Shall we go after her or not?" said Hans.

"Yes, yes!" urged Beret, half distracted. But first they would have to go to the next sœter, and ask their neighbours to send some one to attend to the cows for them. While they were still talking about this and at the same time following the dog, they saw him stop and look back, wagging his tail. They ran to him, and there lay Mildrid!

She was lying with her head on her arm, her face half buried in the heather. They stepped up gently; the dog licked her hands and cheek, and she stretched herself and changed her position, but slept on. "Let her sleep!" whispered Hans; "and you go and put in the cows. I hear the bells." As Beret was running off he went after her. "Bring some food with you when you come back," he whispered. Then he sat down a little way from Mildrid, make the dog lie down beside him, and sat and held him to keep him from barking.

It was a cloudy evening. The near heights and the mountain-tops were grey; it was very quiet; there was not even a bird to be seen. He sat or

lay, with his hand on the dog. He had soon settled what to arrange with Mildrid when she awoke. There was no cloud in their future; he lay quietly looking up into the sky. He knew that their meeting was a miracle. God Himself had told him that they were to go through life together.

He fell to working away at the Bridal March again, and the words that came to him now expressed the quiet happiness of the hour.

It was about eight o'clock when Beret came back, bringing food with her. Mildrid was still sleeping. Beret set down what she was carrying, looked at them both for a minute, and then went and sat down a little way from them. Nearly an hour passed, Beret getting up from time to time to keep herself from falling asleep. Soon after nine Mildrid awoke. She turned several times, at last opened her eyes, saw where she was lying, sat up, and noticed the others. She was still bewildered with sleep, so that she did not take in rightly where she was or what she saw, till Hans rose and came smiling towards her. Then she held out her hands to him.

He sat down beside her:

"You've had a sleep now, Mildrid?"

"Yes, I've slept now."

"And you're hungry?"

"Yes, I'm hungry ——" and Beret came forward with the food. She looked at it and then at them. "Have I slept long?" she asked.

"Well, it's almost nine o'clock; look at the sun!"

Not till now did she begin to remember everything.

"Have you sat here long?"

"No, not very long — but you must eat!" She began to do so. "You were on your way down to the valley?" asked Hans gently, with his head nearer hers. She blushed and whispered, "Yes."

"To-morrow, when you've really had a good sleep and rest, we'll go down together."

Her eyes looked into his, first in surprise, then as if she were thanking him, but she said nothing.

After this she seemed to revive; she asked Beret where *she* had been, and Beret told that she had gone to fetch Hans, and he told all the rest. Mildrid ate and listened, and yielded gradually once again to the old fascination. She laughed when Hans told her how the dog had found her, and had licked her face without wakening her. He was at this moment greedily watching every bite she took, and she began to share with him.

As soon as she had finished, they went slowly towards the sœter — and Beret was soon in bed. The two sat on the bench outside the door. Small rain was beginning to fall, but the broad eaves kept them from feeling it. The mist closed round the sœter, and shut them in in a sort of magic circle. It was neither day nor night, but dark rather than light. Each softly spoken word brought more confidence into their talk. Now for the

first time they were really speaking to each other. He asked her so humbly to forgive him for not having remembered that she must feel differently from him, and that she had parents who must be consulted. She confessed her fear, and then she told him that he was the first real, strong, self-reliant man she had ever known, and that this, and other things she had heard about him, had —— she would not go on.

But in their trembling happiness everything spoke, to the slightest breath they drew. That wonderful intercourse began of soul with soul, which in most cases precedes and prepares for the first embrace, but with these two came after it. The first timid questions came through the darkness, the first timid answers found their way back. The words fell softly, like spirit sounds on the night air. At last Mildrid took courage to ask hesitatingly if her behaviour had not sometimes struck him as very strange. He assured her that he had never thought it so, never once. Had he not noticed that she had not said one word all the time they were together yesterday? No, he had not noticed that. Had he not wondered at her going off down to her parents? No, he had thought it only right of her. Had he not thought (for a long time she would not say this, but at last the words came, in a whisper, with her face turned away), had he not thought that she had let things go too quickly? No, he only thought how beautifully everything had happened. But what had he thought of the way she had cried at their first meeting? Well, at the time it had puzzled him, but now he understood it, quite well — and he was glad she was like that.

All these answers made her so happy that she felt she wanted to be alone. And as if he had guessed this, he got up quietly and said that now she must go to bed. She rose. He nodded and went off slowly towards the shed where he was to sleep; she hurried in, undressed, and when she had got into bed she folded her hands and thanked God. Oh, how she thanked Him! Thanked Him for Hans's love, and patience, and kindness — she had not words enough! Thanked Him for all, all, everything — even for the suffering of the last two days — for had it not made the joy all the greater? Thanked Him for their having been alone up there at this time, and prayed Him to be with her to-morrow when she went down to her parents, then turned her thoughts again to Hans, and gave thanks for him once more, oh, how gratefully!

When she came out of the sœter house in the morning, Beret was still sleeping. Hans was standing in the yard. He had been punishing the dog for rousing a ptarmigan, and it was now lying fawning on him. When he saw Mildrid he let the dog out of disgrace; it jumped up on him and her, barked and caressed them, and was like a living expression of their own bright morning happiness. Hans helped Mildrid and the boys with the morning work. By the time they had done it all and were ready to sit down to breakfast, Beret was up and ready too. Every time Hans looked

at her she turned red, and when Mildrid after breakfast stood playing with his watch chain while she spoke to him, Beret hurried out, and was hardly to be found when it was time for the two to go.

"Mildrid," said Hans, coming close to her and walking slowly, when they had got on a little way, "I have been thinking about something that I didn't say to you yesterday." His voice sounded so serious that she looked up into his face. He went on slowly, without looking at her; "I want to ask you if — God granting that we get each other — if you will go home with me after the wedding and live at Haugen."

She turned red, and presently answered evasively:

"What will father and mother say to that?"

He walked on without answering for a minute, and then said:

"I did not think that mattered so much, if we two were agreed about it."

This was the first time he had said a thing that hurt her. She made no reply. He seemed to be waiting for one, and when none came, added gently:

"I wanted us two to be alone together, to get accustomed to each other."

Now she began to understand him better, but she could not answer. He walked on as before, not looking at her, and now quite silent. She felt uneasy, stole a glance at him, and saw that he had turned quite pale.

"Hans!" she cried, and stood still without being conscious of doing it. Hans stopped too, looked quickly at her, and then down at his gun, which he was resting on the ground and turning in his hand.

"Can you not go with me to my home?" His voice was very low, but all at once he looked her straight in the face.

"Yes, I can!" she answered quickly. Her eyes looked calmly into his, but a faint blush came over her cheeks. He changed his gun into his left hand, and held out the right to her.

"Thank you!" he whispered, holding hers in a firm clasp: Then they went on.

She was brooding over one thought all the time, and at last could not keep it in: "You don't know my father and mother."

He went on a little before he answered: "No, but when you come and live at Haugen, I'll have time to get to know them."

"They are so good!" added Mildrid.

"So I have heard from every one." He said this decidedly, but coldly.

Before she had time to think or say anything more, he began to tell about *his* home, his brothers and sisters, and their industry, affectionateness, and cheerfulness; about the poverty they had raised themselves from; about the tourists who came and all the work they gave; about the house, and especially about the new one he would now build for her and himself. She was to be the mistress of the whole place — but they would help her in everything; they would all try to make her life happy, he not

least. As he talked they walked on faster; he spoke warmly, came closer to her, and at last they walked hand in hand.

It could not be denied that his love for his home and his family made a strong impression on her, and there was a great attraction in the newness of it all; but behind this feeling lay one of wrong-doing towards her parents, her dear, kind parents. So she began again: "Hans! mother is getting old now, and father is older; they have had a great deal of trouble — they need help; they've worked so hard, and ——" she either would not or could not say more.

He walked slower and looked at her, smiling. "Mildrid, you mean that they have settled to give you the farm?"

She blushed, but did not answer.

"Well, then — we'll let that alone till the time comes. When they want us to take their places, it's for them to ask us to do it." He said this very gently and tenderly, but she felt what it meant. Thoughtful of others, as she always was, and accustomed to consider their feelings before her own, she yielded in this too. But very soon they came to where they could see Tingvold in the valley below them. She looked down at it, and then at him, as if it could speak for itself.

The big sunny fields on the hill slope, with the wood encircling and sheltering them, the house and farm buildings a little in the shadow, but big and fine — it all looked so beautiful. The valley, with its rushing, winding river, stretched away down beyond, with farm after farm in the bottom and on its slopes on both sides — but none, not one to equal Tingvold — none so fertile or so pleasant to the eye, none so snugly sheltered, and yet commanding the whole valley. When she saw that Hans was struck by the sight, she reddened with joy.

"Yes," he said, in answer to her unspoken question — "yes, it is true; Tingvold is a fine place; it would be hard to find its equal."

He smiled and bent down to her. "But I care more for you, Mildrid, than for Tingvold; and perhaps — you care more for me than for Tingvold?"

When he took it this way she could say no more. He looked so happy too; he sat down, and she beside him.

"Now I'm going to sing something for you," he whispered.

She felt glad. "I've never heard you sing," she said.

"No, I know you have not; and though people talk about my singing, you must not think it's anything very great. There's only this about it, that it comes upon me sometimes, and then I *must* sing."

He sat thinking for a good while, and then he sang her the song that he had made for their own wedding to the tune of her race's Bridal March. Quite softly he sang it, but with such exultation as she had never heard in any voice before. She looked down on her home, the house she was to drive away from on that day; followed the road with her eyes down

to the bridge across the river, and along on the other side right up to the church, which lay on a height, among birch-trees, with a group of houses near it. It was not a very clear day, but the subdued light over the landscape was in sympathy with the subdued picture in her mind. How many hundred times had she not driven that road in fancy, only she never knew with whom! The words and the tune entranced her; the peculiar warm, soft voice seemed to touch the very depths of her being; her eyes were full, but she was not crying; nor was she laughing. She was sitting with her hand on his, now looking at him, now over the valley, when she saw smoke beginning to rise from the chimney of her home; the fire was being lit for making the dinner. This was an omen; she turned to Hans and pointed. He had finished his song now, and they sat still and looked.

Very soon they were on their way down through the birch wood, and Hans was having trouble with the dog, to make him keep quiet. Mildrid's heart began to throb. Hans arranged with her that he would stay behind, but near the house; it was better that she should go in first alone. He carried her over one or two marshy places, and he felt that her hands were cold. "Don't think of what you're to say," he whispered; "just wait and see how things come." She gave no sound in answer, nor did she look at him.

They came out of the wood — the last part had been big dark fir-trees, among which they had walked slowly, he quietly telling her about her great-grandfather's wooing of his father's sister, Aslaug; an old, strange story, which she only half heard, but which all the same helped her — came out of the wood into the open fields and meadows; and he became quiet too. Now she turned to him, and her look expressed such a great dread of what was before her that it made him feel wretched. He found no words of encouragement; the matter concerned him too nearly. They walked on a little farther, side by side, some bushes between them and the house concealing them from its inhabitants. When they got so near that he thought she must now go on alone, he whistled softly to the dog, and she took this as the sign that they must part. She stopped and looked utterly unhappy and forlorn; he whispered to her: "I'll be praying for you here, Mildrid — and I'll come when you need me." She gave him a kind of distracted look of thanks; she was really unable either to think or to see clearly. Then she walked on.

As soon as she came out from the bushes she saw right into the big room of the main building — right through it — for it had windows at both ends, one looking up towards the wood and one down the valley. Hans had seated himself behind the nearest bush, with the dog at his side, and he too could see everything in the room; at this moment there was no one in it. Mildrid looked back once when she came to the barn, and he nodded to her. Then she went round the end of the barn, into the yard.

Everything stood in its old, accustomed order, and it was very quiet. Some hens were walking on the barn-steps. The wooden framework for the stacks had been brought out and set up against the storehouse wall since she was there last; that was the only change she saw. She turned to the right to go first into grandmother's house, her fear tempting her to take this little respite before meeting her parents; when, just between the two houses, at the wood-block, she came on her father, fitting a handle to an axe. He was in his knitted jersey with the braces over it, bareheaded, his thin long hair blowing in the breeze that was beginning to come up from the valley. He looked well, and almost cheerful at his work, and she took courage at the sight. He did not notice her, she had come so quietly and cautiously over the flagstones.

"Good morning!" she said in a low voice.

He looked at her in surprise for a moment.

"Is that you, Mildrid? Is there anything the matter?" he added hastily, examining her face.

"No," she said, and blushed a little. But he kept his eyes on hers, and she did not dare to look up.

Then he put down the axe, saying:

"Let us go in to mother!"

On the way he asked one or two questions about things up at the sœter, and got satisfactory answers.

"Now Hans sees us going in," thought Mildrid, as they passed a gap between the bars and some of the smaller outhouses.

When they got into the living-room, her father went to the door leading to the kitchen, opened it, and called:

"Come here, mother! Mildrid has come down."

"Why, Mildrid, has anything gone wrong?" was answered from the kitchen.

"No," replied Mildrid from behind her father, and then coming to the door herself, she went into the kitchen and stood beside her mother, who was sitting by the hearth paring potatoes and putting them in the pot.

Her mother now looked as inquiringly at her as her father had done, with the same effect. Then Randi set away the potato dish, went to the outer door and spoke to some one there, came back again, took off her kitchen apron and washed her hands, and they went together into the room.

Mildrid knew her parents, and knew that these preparations meant that they expected something unusual. She had had little courage before, but now it grew less. Her father took his raised seat close to the farthest away window, the one that looked down the valley. Her mother sat on the same bench, but nearer the kitchen. Mildrid seated herself on the opposite one, in front of the table. Hans could see her there; and he could see her father right in the face, but her mother he could hardly see.

Her mother asked, as her father had done before about things at the sœter; got the same information and a little more; for she asked more particularly. It was evident that both sides were making this subject last as long as possible, but it was soon exhausted. In the pause that came, both parents looked at Mildrid. She avoided the look, and asked what news there was of the neighbours. This subject was also drawn out as long as possible, but it came to an end too. The same silence, the same expectant eyes turned on the daughter. There was nothing left for her to ask about, and she began to rub her hand back and forwards on the bench.

"Have you been in at grandmother's?" asked her mother, who was beginning to get frightened.

No, she had not been there. This meant then that their daughter had something particular to say to *them*, and it could not with any seemliness be put off longer.

"There is something that I must tell you," she got out at last, with changing colour and downcast eyes.

Her father and mother exchanged troubled looks. Mildrid raised her head and looked at them with great imploring eyes.

"What is it, my child?" asked her mother anxiously.

"I am betrothed," said Mildrid; hung her head again, and burst into tears.

No more stunning blow could have fallen on the quiet circle. The parents sat looking at each other, pale and silent. The steady, gentle Mildrid, for whose careful ways and whose obedience they had so often thanked God, had, without asking their advice, without their knowledge, taken life's most important step, a step that was also decisive for *their* past and future. Mildrid felt each thought along with them, and fear stopped her crying.

Her father asked gently and slowly: "To whom, my child?"

After a silence came the whispered answer: "To Hans Haugen."

No name or event connected with Haugen had been mentioned in that room for more than twenty years. In her parents' opinion nothing but evil had come to Tingvold from there. Mildrid again knew their thoughts: she sat motionless, awaiting her sentence.

Her father spoke again mildly and slowly: "We don't know the man, neither I nor your mother — and we didn't know that you knew him."

"And I didn't know him either," said Mildrid.

The astonished parents looked at each other. "How did it happen then?" It was her mother who asked this.

"That is what I don't know myself," said Mildrid.

"But, my child, surely you're mistress of your own actions?"

Mildrid did not answer.

"We thought," added her father gently, "that we could be quite sure of *you*."

Mildrid did not answer.

"But how did it happen?" repeated her mother more impatiently; you must know that!"

"No, I don't know it — I only know that I could not help it — no, I couldn't!" She was sitting holding on to the bench with both hands.

"God forgive and help you! Whatever came over you?"

Mildrid gave no answer.

Her father calmed their rising excitement by saying in a gentle, friendly voice: "Why did you not speak to one of us my child?"

And her mother controlled herself, and said quietly: "You know how much we think of our children, we who have lived such a lonely life; and — yes, we may say it, especially of you, Mildrid; for you have been so much to us."

Mildrid felt as if she did not know where she was.

"Yes, we did not think you would desert us like this."

It was her father who spoke last. Though the words came gently, they did not hurt the less.

"I will not desert you!" she stammered.

"You must not say that," he answered, more gravely than before, "for you have done it already."

Mildrid felt that this was true, and at the same time that it was not true, but she could not put her feeling into words.

Her mother went on: "Of what good has it all been, the love that we have shown our children, and the fear of God that we have taught them? In the first temptation——" for her daughter's sake she could say no more.

But Mildrid could bear it no longer. She threw her arms over the table, laid her head on them, her face towards her father, and sobbed.

Neither father nor mother was capable of adding by another reproachful word to the remorse she seemed to feel. So there was silence.

It might have lasted long — but Hans Haugen saw from where he sat that she was in need of help. His hunter's eye had caught every look, seen the movement of their lips, seen her silent struggle; now he saw her throw herself on the table, and he jumped up, and soon his light foot was heard in the passage. He knocked; they all looked up, but no one said, "Come in!" Mildrid half rose, blushing through her tears; the door opened, and Hans with his gun and dog stood there, pale but quite composed. He turned and shut the door, while the dog, wagging his tail, went up to Mildrid. Hans had been too preoccupied to notice that it had followed him in.

"Good morning!" said he. Mildrid fell back on her seat, drew a long breath, and looked at him with relief in her eyes; her fear, her bad conscience — all gone! *She was right, yes; she was right* — let come now whatever it pleased God to send!

No one had answered Hans's greeting, nor had he been asked to come forward.

"I am Hans Haugen," he said quietly; lowered his gun and stood holding it. After the parents had exchanged looks once or twice, he went on, but with a struggle: "I came down with Mildrid, for if she has done wrong, it was my fault."

Something had to be said. The mother looked at the father, and at last he said that all this had happened without their knowing anything of it, and that Mildrid could give them no explanation of how it had come about. Hans answered that neither could he. "I am not a boy," he said, "for I am twenty-eight; but yet it came this way, that I, who never cared for any one before, could think of nothing else in the world from the time I saw her. If she had said No — well, I can't tell — but I shouldn't have been good for much after that."

The quiet, straightforward way he said this made a good impression. Mildrid trembled; for she felt that this gave things a different look. Hans had his cap on, for in their district it was not the custom for a passer-by to take off his hat when he came in; but now he took it off unconsciously, hung it on the barrel of his gun, and crossed his hands over it. There was something about his whole appearance and behaviour that claimed consideration.

"Mildrid is so young," said her mother; "none of us had thought of anything like this beginning with her already."

"That is true enough, but to make up I am so much older," he answered; and the housekeeping at home, in my house, is no great affair; it will not task her too hard — and I have plenty of help."

The parents looked at each other, at Mildrid, at him. "Do you mean her to go home with you?" the father asked incredulously, almost ironically.

"Yes," said Hans; "it is not the farm that I am coming after." He reddened, and so did Mildrid.

If the farm had sunk into the ground the parents could not have been more astonished than they were at hearing it thus despised, and Mildrid's silence showed that she agreed with Hans. There was something in this resolution of the young people, unintentional on their part that, as it were, took away from the parents the right of decision; they felt themselves humbled.

"And it was you who said that you would not forsake us," said her mother in quiet reproach, that went to Mildrid's heart. But Hans came to her assistance:

"Every child that marries has to leave its parents."

He smiled, and added in a friendly way: "But it's not a long journey to Haugen from here — just a little over four miles."

Words are idle things at a time like this; thoughts take their own way

in spite of them. The parents felt themselves deserted, almost deceived by the young ones. They knew that there was no fault to be found with the way of living at Haugen; the tourists had given the place a good name; from time to time it had been noticed in the newspapers; but Haugen was Haugen, and that their dearest child should wish to carry their race back to Haugen was more than they could bear! In such circumstances most people would likely have been angry, but what these two desired was to get quietly away from what pained them. They exchanged a look of understanding, and the father said mildly:

"This is too much for us all at once; we can't well give our answer yet."

"No," continued the mother; "we were not expecting such great news — nor to get it like this."

Hans stood quiet for a minute before he said:

"It is true enough that Mildrid should first have asked her parents' leave. But remember that neither of us knew what was happening till it was too late. For that is really the truth. Then we could do no more than come at once, both of us, and that we have done. You must not be too hard on us."

This left really nothing more to be said about their behaviour, and Hans's quiet manner made his words sound all the more trustworthy. Altogether Endrid felt that he was not holding his own against him, and the little confidence he had in himself made him the more desirous to get away.

"We do not know you," he said, and looked at his wife. "We must be allowed to think it over."

"Yes, that will certainly be best," went on Randi; "we ought to know something about the man we are to give our child to."

Mildrid felt the offence there was in these words, but looked imploringly at Hans.

"That is true," answered Hans, beginning to turn his gun under the one hand; "although I don't believe there are many men in the district much better known than I am. But perhaps someone has spoken ill of me?" He looked up to them.

Mildrid sat there feeling ashamed on her parents' account, and they themselves felt that they had perhaps awakened a false suspicion, and this they had no desire to do. So both said at once:

"No, we have heard nothing bad of you."

And the mother hastened to add that it was really the case that they hardly knew anything about him, for they had so seldom asked about the Haugen people. She meant no harm at all by saying this, and not till the words had passed her lips did she notice that she had expressed herself unfortunately, and she could see that both her husband and Mildrid felt the same. It was a little time before the answer came:

"If the family of Tingvold have never asked after the Haugen people, the fault is not ours; we have been poor people till these last years."

In these few words lay a reproach that was felt by all three to be deserved, and that thoroughly. But never till now had it occurred to either husband or wife that they had been in this case neglecting a duty; never till now had they reflected that their poor relations at Haugen should not have been made to suffer for misfortunes of which they had been in no way the cause. They stole an awkward glance at each other, and sat still, feeling real shame. Hans had spoken quietly, though Randi's words must have been very irritating to him. This made both the old people feel that he was a fine fellow, and that they had two wrongs to make good again. Thus it came about that Endrid said:

"Let us take time and think things over; can't you stay here and have dinner with us? Then we can talk a little."

And Randi added: "Come away here and sit down."

Both of them rose.

Hans set away the gun with his cap on it, and went forward to the bench on which Mildrid was sitting, whereupon she at once got up, she did not know why. Her mother said she had things to see to in the kitchen, and went out. Her father was preparing to go too; but Mildrid did not wish to be alone with Hans as long as her parents withheld their consent, so she went towards the other door, and they presently saw her crossing the yard to her grandmother's house. As Endrid could not leave Hans alone, he turned and sat down again.

The two men talked together about indifferent matters — first it was about the hunting, about the Haugen brothers' arrangements in the little summer huts they had high up on the mountains, about the profits they made by this sort of thing, &c., &c. From this they came to Haugen itself, and the tourists, and the farm management; and from all he heard Endrid got the impression of there being prosperity there now, and plenty of life. Randi came backwards and forwards, making preparations for the dinner, and often listened to what was being said; and it was easy to see that the two old people, at first so shy of Hans, became by degrees a little surer of him; for the questions began to be more personal.

They did not fail to observe his good manners at the dinner-table. He sat with his back to the wall, opposite Mildrid and her mother; the father sat at the end of the table on his high seat. The farm people had dined earlier, in the kitchen, where indeed all in the house generally took their meals together. They were making the difference to-day because they were unwilling that Hans should be seen. Mildrid felt at table that her mother looked at her whenever Hans smiled. He had one of those serious faces that grow very pleasant when they smile. One or two such things Mildrid added together in her mind, and brought them to the sum she wanted to arrive at. Only she did not feel herself so sure, but that the strain in the room was too great for her, and she was glad enough to escape from it by going after dinner again to her grandmother's.

The men took a walk about the farm, but they neither went where the people were working, nor where grandmother could see them. Afterwards they came and sat in the room again, and now mother had finished her work and could sit with them. By degrees the conversation naturally became more confidential, and in course of time (but this was not till towards evening) Randi ventured to ask Hans how it had all come about between him and Mildrid; Mildrid herself had been able to give no account of it. Possibly it was principally out of feminine curiosity that the mother asked, but the question was a very welcome one to Hans.

He described everything minutely, and with such evident happiness, that the old people were almost at once carried away by his story. And when he came to yesterday — to the forced march Beret had made in search of him because Mildrid was plunged in anguish of mind on her parents' account — and then came to Mildrid herself, and told of her ever-increasing remorse became her parents knew nothing; told of her flight down to them, and how, worn-out in soul and body, she had had to sit down and rest and had fallen asleep, alone and unhappy — then the old people felt that they recognised their child again. And the mother especially began to feel that she had perhaps been too hard with her.

While the young man was telling about Mildrid, he was telling too, without being aware of it, about himself; for his love to Mildrid showed clearly in every word, and made her parents glad. He felt this himself at last, and was glad too — and the old couple unaccustomed to such quiet self-reliance and strength, felt real happiness. This went on increasing, till the mother at last, without thinking, said smilingly:

"I suppose you've arranged everything right up to the wedding, you two — before asking either of us?"

The father laughed too, and Hans answered, just as it occurred to him at the moment, by softly singing a single line of the Wedding March,

"Play away! speed us on! we're in haste, I and you!"

and laughed; but was modest enough at once to turn to something else. He happened accidentally to look at Randi, and saw that she was quite pale. He felt in an instant that he had made a mistake in recalling that tune to her. Endrid looked apprehensively at his wife, whose emotion grew till it became so strong that she could not stay in the room; she got up and went out.

"I know I have done something wrong," said Hans anxiously.

Endrid made no reply. Hans, feeling very unhappy, got up to go after Randi and excuse himself, but sat down again, declaring that he had meant no harm at all.

"No, you could hardly be expected to understand rightly about that," said Endrid.

"Can't *you* go after her and put it right again?"

He had already such confidence in this man that he dared ask him anything.

But Endrid said: "No; rather leave her alone just now; I know her."

Hans, who a few minutes before had felt himself at the very goal of his desires, now felt himself cast into the depths of despair, and would not be cheered up, though Endrid strove patiently to do it. The dog helped by coming forward to them; for Endrid went on asking questions about him, and afterwards told with real pleasure about a dog he himself had had, and had taken much interest in, as is generally the way with people leading a lonely life.

Randi had gone out and sat down on the doorstep. The thought of her daughter's marriage and the sound of the Bridal March together had stirred up old memories too painfully. *She* had not, like her daughter, given herself willingly to a man she loved! The shame of her wedding-day had been deserved; and that shame, and the trouble, and the loss of their children — all the suffering and struggle of years came over her again.

And so all her Bible-reading and all her praying had been of no avail! She sat there in the most violent agitation! Her grief that she could thus be overcome caused her in despair to begin the bitterest self-accusation. Again she felt the scorn of the crowd at her foolish bridal procession; again she loathed herself for her own weakness — that she could not stop her crying then, nor her thinking of it now — that with her want of self-control she had cast undeserved suspicion on her parents, destroyed her own health and through this caused the death of the children she bore, and lastly that with all this she had embittered the life of a loving husband, and feigned a piety that was not real, as her present behaviour clearly showed!

How dreadful that she still felt it in this way — that she had got no farther!

Then it burst upon her — both her crying in church and the consuming bitterness that had spoiled the early years of her married life had been *wounded vanity*. It was wounded vanity that was weeping now; and that might at any moment separate her from God, her happiness in this world and the world to come!

So worthless, so worthless did she feel herself that she dared not look up to God; for oh! how great were her shortcomings towards Him! But why, she began to wonder, why had she succumbed just now — at the moment when her daughter, in all true-heartedness and overflowing happiness, had given herself to the man she loved? Why at this moment arouse all the ugly memories and thoughts that lay dormant in her mind? Was she envious of Mildrid; envious of her own daughter? No, *that* she knew she was not — and she began to recover herself.

What a grand thought it was that her daughter was perhaps going to atone for *her* fault! Could children do that? Yes, as surely as they them-

selves were a work of ours, they could — but we must help too, with repentance, with gratitude! And before Randi knew what was happening, she could pray again, bowing in deep humility and contrition before the Lord, who had once more shown her what she was without Him. She prayed for grace as one that prays for life; for she felt that it was life that was coming to her again! Now her account was blotted out; it was just the last settling of it that had unnerved her.

She rose and looked up through streaming tears; she knew that things had come right now; there was One who had lifted the burden of pain from her!

Had she not had the same feeling often before? No, never a feeling like this — not till now was the victory won. And she went forward knowing that she had gained the mastery over herself. Something was broken that till now had bound her — she felt with every movement that she was free both in soul and body. And if, after God, she had her daughter to thank for this, that daughter should in return be helped to enjoy her own happiness to the full.

By this time she was in the passage of grandmother's house; but no one in the house recognised her step. She took hold of the latch and opened the door like a different person. "Mildrid, come here!" she said; and Mildrid and her grandmother looked at each other, for that was not mother. Mildrid ran to her. What could be happening? Her mother took her by the arm, shut the door behind her, so that they were alone, then threw her arms round her neck, and wept and wept, embracing her with a vehemence and happiness which Mildrid, uplifted by her love, could return right heartily.

"God for ever bless and recompense you!" whispered the mother.

The two sitting in the other house saw them coming across the yard, hand in hand, walking so fast that they felt sure something had happened. The door opened and both came forward. But instead of giving her to Hans, or saying anything to him or Endrid, the mother just put her arms once more round her daughter, and repeated with a fresh burst of emotion: "God for ever bless and reward you!"

Soon they were all sitting in grandmother's room. The old woman was very happy. She knew quite well who Hans Haugen was — the young people had often spoken about him; and she at once understood that this union wiped out, as it were, much that was painful in the life of her son and his wife. Besides, Hans's good looks rejoiced the cheery old woman's heart. They all stayed with her, and the day ended with father, after a psalm, reading from a prayer-book a portion beginning: "The Lord has been in our house!"

I shall only tell of two days in their life after this, and in each of these days only of a few minutes.

The first is the young people's wedding-day. Inga, Mildrid's cousin, herself a married woman now, had come to deck out the bride. This was done in the store-house. The old chest which held the family's bridal silver ornaments — crown, girdle, stomacher, brooches, rings — was drawn from its place. Grandmother had the key of it, and came to open it, Beret acting as her assistant. Mildrid had put on her wedding-dress and all the ornaments that belonged to herself, before this grandeur (well polished by Beret and grandmother the week before) came to light, glittering and heavy. One after another each ornament was tried. Beret held the mirror in front of the bride. Grandmother told how many of her family had worn these silver things on their wedding-day, the happiest of them all her own mother, Aslaug Haugen.

Presently they heard the Bridal March played outside; they all stopped, listened, and then hurried to the door to see what it meant. The first person they saw was Endrid, the bride's father. He had seen Hans Haugen with his brothers and sisters coming driving up the road to the farm. It was not often that any idea out of the common came to Endrid, but on this occasion it did occur to him that these guests ought to be received with the March of their race. He called out the fiddlers and started them; he was standing beside them himself, and some others had joined him, when Hans and his good brothers and sisters, in two carriages, drove into the yard. It was easily seen that this reception touched them.

An hour later the March of course struck up again. This was when the bride and bridegroom, and after them the bride's parents, came out, with the players going before them, to get into the carriages. At some great moments in our lives all the omens are propitious; to-day the bridal party drove away from Tingvold in glorious spring weather. The crowd at the church was so great that no one remembered having seen the like of it, on any occasion. And in this gathering each person knew the story of the family, and its connection with the Bridal March which was sounding exultantly in the sunshine over the heads of bride and bridegroom.

And because they were all thinking of the one thing, the pastor took a text for his address that allowed him to explain how our children are our life's crown, bearing clear witness to our honour, our development, our work.

On the way back from the altar Hans stopped just outside the church-door; he said something; the bride, in her superhuman happiness, did not hear it; but she felt what it was. He wished her to look at Ole Haugen's grave, how richly clad in flowers it lay to-day. She looked, and they passed out almost touching his headstone; the parents following them.

The other incident in their life that must be recalled is the visit of Endrid and Randi as grandparents. Hans has carried out his determination that they were to live at Haugen, although he had to promise that he would take Tingvold when the old people either could or would no longer

manage it, and when the old grandmother was dead. But in their whole visit there is only one single thing that concerns us here, and that is that Randi, after a kind reception and good entertainment, when she was sitting with her daughter's child on her knee, began rocking it and crooning something — and what she crooned was the Bridal March. Her daughter clasped her hands in wonder and delight, but controlled herself at once and kept silence; Hans offered Endrid more to drink, which he declined; but this was on both sides only an excuse for exchanging a look.

HERMAN BANG

(1857-)

HERMAN BANG was born on the Island of Als, Schleswig, in 1857, of an ancient and noble Danish family. He was forced to make his own living at the age of nineteen. He was for a number of years an actor. After leaving the stage he began writing. His first novel made an enormous success, and gave him money and plenty of leisure for travel. On returning to his native country, he made himself famous as a public lecturer and reader.

Bang's outstanding books are his novels and tales. Among his shorter works of fiction, *The Four Devils* is the best known.

The translation that follows was made especially for this volume, by Marie Ottilie Heyl. It has never before appeared in English.

THE FOUR DEVILS

THE director's bell rang. Gradually the people drifted into their seats, while the trampling in the balcony, the chatter in the orchestra, and the shouts of the boys who sold oranges almost drowned out the music; and, at last, even the blasé individuals in the boxes settled down in expectation.

The next number was, *Quatre Diables*, or *The Four Devils*. The net was stretched in readiness. Fritz and Adolf dashed out of their dressing room into the performers' lobby, and hurried along the passage, their gray cloaks flapping about their legs. They knocked at a door and called, "Aimée and Louise!"

Both sisters were waiting. They too were in a state of feverish excitement, wrapped in long white evening capes which enveloped them completely. Their maid, her felt hat stuck on askew, kept shrieking hoarsely, as she flew aimlessly around, carrying arm rouge and powdered resin.

"Come girls," called Adolf, "it's time." But for another moment they all ran aimlessly about, seized by the fever that attacks all trapeze artists, once they feel the tights on their legs.

The maid was making the most noise.

Aimée alone kept her composure, calmly extending her arms, from the depths of voluminous sleeves, towards Fritz. And quickly, without glancing at her face or speaking a word, he mechanically rubbed the powder puff up and down her outstretched arms, — as he always did.

"Come on," cried Adolf again.

They all ran out, hand in hand, and waited at the entrance, listening from without for the first strains of *The Love Waltz* to which they worked. It began:

Amour, amour,
Oh, bel oiseau,
Chante, chante,
Chante toujours.

Fritz and Adolf threw off their cloaks, and stood forth, radiant in suits of a pink so delicate that it seemed almost white. Their bodies actually appeared naked: every muscle showed.

The music ceased.

Meanwhile in the stable all was still and deserted except for a few attendants occupied in examining the feed bins. They allowed nothing to disturb them in their task of lifting, and suspiciously inspecting the heavy receptacles.

The melody began again, and The Four Devils entered the ring.

The applause sounded in their ears like a vague roar, and they could not distinguish a face. Every fibre of their bodies seemed aquiver with exertion.

Then Adolf and Fritz quickly unclasped the heavy cloaks for Louise and Aimée; the wraps slipped to the sand, and straightway hundreds of opera-glasses were focussed on the girls. They, too, appeared naked in their black tights, like two negresses with white faces.

The four swung themselves into the net and began to work. Nude they all seemed, as they flew to and fro between the swings, with their bars of shining brass. They embraced, caught one another, and encouraged each other with mutual cheers. It seemed as if the black and white bodies were passionately entwined, only to fall apart once more in their seductive nudeness.

And the *Love Waltz* with its sleepily languishing rhythm went on and on; the women's hair, when they flew, fluttered about their black bodies, enveloping them like shining satin cloaks.

They went on and on, working above each other. Adolf and Louise were above the others. The applause reached them in a confused murmur, while the performers in their boxes, among them the still excited maid with her rose-wreathed hat more crazily askew than before, kept their glasses glued on the Devils. These four were known throughout the circus world for their daring.

"Oui, oui, their hips are quite free."

"The trick, you see, is to have the thighs exposed." These exclamations came from the artists' box.

The stout première equestrienne of "The Knights of the Sixteenth Century," Mademoiselle Rosa, laid her glasses heavily to one side. "No

they are not wearing a sign of a corset," she sighed, sweating at every pore, under her own heavy armor.

They continued to work. The electric lights alternated from blue to yellow, as the bodies flew through the air.

Fritz gave a cry as, hanging by his feet, he caught Aimée in his arms. Then they rested, sitting side by side on the trapeze.

They heard Louise and Adolf calling to each other up above; Aimée, with laboring breath, commented on Louise's work:

"Voyez donc, voyez," she cried, as Adolf caught Louise on his legs.

But Fritz made no reply. As he wiped his hands on the little square of cloth that he kept for that purpose, his eyes were glued on the tier of boxes that glowed and swayed far below them like the border of a many-colored flower-bed.

Suddenly Aimée, too, grew silent, and stared in the same direction, until, with an obvious effort at detachment, he remarked:

"It's our turn now," and she recalled herself with a jerk.

Again they dried their hands on the cambric, and threw themselves forward, hanging by their arms, as if to try the strength of their biceps. Then back into place again. With their souls in their eyes, they measured the distance between the trapezes. Suddenly both cried:

"Du courage!"

And Fritz flew backwards to the farthest trapeze, while Louise and Adolf emitted a long sustained cry, like one who encourages an animal.

Amour, amour,
Oh, bel oiseau,
Chante, chante,
Chante toujours.

Their big act began. They took off backwards, flew past each other with hoarse cries, and reached the distant goal. With another shout, they repeated this. Then, as Louise and Adolf revolved on their swings like wheels endowed with perpetual motion, there fell from the very top of the rotunda, a rain of glittering dust, that sifted slowly downward, glowing in the pure white flood of the calcium lights. For a moment, the Devils seemed to fly through a shimmering cloud of gold, while the settling dust bespangled their nudity with thousands of golden specks.

Suddenly, one after the other, they shot head-first through the glittering mist into the net — and the music stopped.

In sudden confusion, they leaned on each other as if they had become dizzy. Only after they had answered a number of curtain calls, did the applause begin to subside.

Moaning, they ran into their dressing rooms; Adolf and Fritz threw themselves flat on a mattress that lay on the floor, and rolled themselves up in blankets. There they rested a while, almost unconscious. At last

they got up and changed their clothes. Adolf looked sharply from his own reflection to Fritz, who was putting on a groom's coat.

"Going on duty?" he inquired.

Fritz answered crossly: "The manager asked me to."

He joined the others who were keeping watch at the stables, and like him, were resting their exhausted bodies against the wall. . . .

After the performance, the troupe gathered in the restaurant. The Devils sat, mute like the others, at a private table. A few of the guests were playing cards, but quite silently. Not a sound, but the clink of the coins as they were pushed across the table. Two waiters stood in front of the buffet, and stared dully at all these silent people, sitting stupidly along the wall, with outstretched legs, and nerveless, dangling arms. The waiters began to turn down the gas.

Adolf laid some money beside one of the beer glasses and got up. "Come on," he said, "let's go." The other three followed.

The streets were quiet; not a sound but their own footsteps, as they walked along two by two, just as they worked. Having reached their boarding place, they parted in the dark entry of the first floor with a soft "good night."

Aimée waited on the dark landing, until Fritz and Adolf had reached the second floor, and closed the door behind them. Then she joined her sister, and the two girls undressed without saying a word. But, once in bed, Louise began to chat about the work of the others, about the people in the boxes, and the regular habitués, for she knew all their faces. Aimée continued to sit, half undressed on the edge of the bed, without moving, while Louise's chatter became more and more fragmentary, until she finally fell asleep. A little later, she awoke, and sat up with a start. Aimée was still sitting beside her, in the same position.

"Aren't you *ever* coming to bed?" asked Louise.

Aimeé quickly turned out the light. "Right away," she said, and got up. But even in bed she could not sleep. One thing kept going through her mind: that Fritz's eyes never met hers any more, when he powdered her arms.

Fritz and Adolf were also in bed, but Fritz tossed about like a man on the rack: Was that meant for him? And what did she want of him, that woman in the box? Did she want anything? Why, then, must she stare at him so persistently? Why brush by him so closely? What did it all mean?

He thought of nothing but this woman. From morning till night, of nothing but her, just her. He felt like an animal in a cage; always the same question kept revolving in his head: what of this woman in the box? He sensed the fragrance of her clothing, as he did whenever she came down and brushed by him, as he stood waiting in his groom's livery.

But was all this really meant for him? What did she want? He con-

tinued to toss painfully to and fro, repeating into the darkness, as if it fascinated him, the phrase, *femme du monde!* And the same questions surged over him anew. Was it meant for him? Was it meant for him?

Aimée had got up again. Silently, she crept across the room. In the dark, her fingers groped for the rosary in the bureau drawer; they touched it.

The house was still, so still . . .

The Devils had been working. In the dressing-room, Adolf was scolding because Fritz, so he insisted, had ruined their contract through his everlasting services as groom, for the Devils were exempted from this.

But Fritz had not a word to reply. Every evening, he donned the livery, and taking his post beside the box entrance, waited for the "Lady of the Box" to come out, leaning on her husband's arm. She often sat during the whole of the last act in the stable; and Fritz always followed her. She spoke to the attendants, patted the horses, or read aloud the names affixed to the stalls. Fritz followed her, but to him she never addressed a word.

It was all for his benefit — ah, he knew it well; through a thousand little gestures — the straightening of her back, the movement of her arm, the glance of her eye, she showed that they were destined for one another. They seemed actually to touch, though each took care to keep the distance that separated them. In spite of it, they felt close to each other; it was as if some indescribable impulse had caught them in a double coil that held them both bound. She changed her place, to read the inscription on a new stall. Fritz followed. She laughed, walked on, but returned to pat the dogs. Fritz followed, followed, wherever she led.

He pretended not to see her. But his eyes rested on the hem of her dress and on her extended hand with the look of a wild beast that is being broken, a look full of lowering hate, because the creature feels his impotence.

One evening she approached him; her husband had walked on a little. He started at her softly breathed question: "Are you afraid of me?"

He hesitated a moment. "I don't know," he answered. His voice was hoarse and harsh. She could not reply. Seized by a sudden fear that sobered her, she realized all that those burning looks conveyed. She turned, and with a short laugh that offended her own ears, walked rapidly away.

On the next evening, Fritz did not go to the stalls. He had determined to avoid her, firmly resolved not to see her again. He felt that engulfing fear of women, which most circus performers have, as lurking foes ready to work their ruination, mysterious enemies who lie in wait, and are only born to work havoc with a man's strength. And if, carried on the tide of an irresistible impulse, he ever should surrender, this would be with a sort of desperate self-renunciation, a vengeful hatred of the woman, who was taking from him a part of his body, robbing him of his strength, his priceless stock-in-trade, his sole means of existence.

But this woman in the box was doubly dangerous, since she was a stranger, and not one of his own kind. What did she want of him? The very thought of her tortured his brain, which was not accustomed to thinking. He watched with apprehension every movement, feeling that she would do him some great, mysterious wrong. Well he knew that there was no escape.

He would not see her again, positively not. It was easy to keep his vow, for she no longer came; not for two days, not for three. On the fourth, Fritz again donned his livery. But she did not appear, either on that evening or the following. All day long, he thought in fear, "If she should come," and in the evening came a dull anger, a brutal, inner rage, because she was not there.

So she had made a fool of him, lured him on, and then cast him off. So that was the kind of woman she was! But he would have revenge, he would find her. . . .

He visualized it all; how he would rain blows upon her, kick and maltreat her, until she writhed and lay half dead — she, that female! At night he lay for hours in silent wrath. And his desire took root during those first sleepless nights, took root in his despair, for he had never lain sleepless before.

Then at last, on the ninth day, she came. From the trapeze he caught sight of her face — he seemed to be looking through the eyes of another — and with a sudden jerk, in boyish exuberance, he launched his magnificent slender body, swinging by his taut arms, out into the air. His face was lighted by a brilliant smile, as he pulled himself up.

Amour, amour,
Oh, bel oiseau,
Chante, chante,
Chante toujours.

Lightly swaying his head in time to the waltz, he seized Aimée's hand gladly and joyfully, for the first time in a week, and called loudly to her, "Enfin, du courage!" It sounded like a shout of triumph. Yet afterwards, when he entered the stalls in his uniform, and found *her* there, he was again stricken dumb; he felt hostile and fixed upon her the same look of hatred that had not dared to meet her eyes before. But in the restaurant, after the performance, he suddenly grew animated, almost reckless. He laughed loudly, and performed all sorts of tricks. He juggled cups and steins, and even balanced his high silk hat on the tip of his cane. The other artists were captivated by his high spirits. The clown, Tom, fetched his accordion and played lustily, stalking over the chairs with his long legs.

Monstrous excitement ensued. Everybody did tricks. Mr. Fillis balanced a huge paper bag on his nose, and two or three clowns cackled, as if they

were in a chicken yard. Fritz screamed loudest of all. Having jumped upon a table, he juggled two glass globes that he had unscrewed from the chandelier, and called, with beaming countenance, above all the din, "Adolf, tiens!"

Adolf, standing on the next table, caught the globe deftly.

The performers were everywhere, now on the chairs, now on the tables. The clowns cackled; the accordion wailed.

"Fritz, tiens!"

The globes flew back and forth again, over the heads of the clowns. Fritz caught them, and spun quickly around:

"Aimée, tiens!"

He threw them straight at Aimée, and though she jumped up quickly, it was too late; the globe crashed to the floor. Fritz burst out laughing, as he looked down on the broken glass from the table on which he stood.

"That's good luck," he said, and laughed; then stopped suddenly, his eyes riveted on the gas fixture.

Aimée had turned away. She had grown pale, as she took her place against the wall. The racket continued, though it was almost midnight. The waiters turned down the gas, but the performers did not cease; in fact, they redoubled the noise in the dim half light. From all sides, arose an ear-splitting cackling and shrieking. Fritz was walking on his hands across the table under the chandelier.

He was the last to leave. He was as excited as though he were drunk.

They walked along in little groups, they gradually separated. Their farewells sounded strange in the darkness. "Night," called Mr. Fillis, — nasal as ever.

"Good night, good night." . . .

At last, all was quiet, and the Four Devils sauntered along in their accustomed silence. They no longer cared to talk, though Fritz could not settle down; he spun his good hat on the end of his cane.

Finally they reached their lodgings, and bade each other good night.

As soon as he reached the bedroom, Fritz opened both windows wide and began to whistle loudly, so that the sound carried far out into the street.

"Are you crazy?" asked Adolf. "What the devil ails you, anyway?"

Fritz merely laughed: "Il fait si beau temps," was all he answered, and again resumed his whistling.

Downstairs, Aimée also had opened a window. Louise, on the point of undressing, asked her to close it, but the other remained motionless, staring into the dark street.

Until now she had not understood why his eyes stared so vacantly when he looked at her; why he sounded so bored when he spoke to her; and why he seemed half deaf when she said anything to him. They were no longer the same beings: yesterday he had even refused to powder her arms. He

had dashed in, rushed and impatient as ever, but when she stretched out her arms, he had merely stared vacantly at them, and, then, collecting his thoughts, gruffly burst out:

"Oh, powder them yourself!" and walked away.

Without understanding, she had slowly powdered first the left arm, then the right.

Never had she realized that anyone could suffer so.

Aimée rested her head against the window frame, sudden, scalding tears rolling down her cheeks. Now she knew everything; now she understood.

Suddenly she raised her head: Fritz was beginning to hum loudly to himself. It was the *Love Waltz*. Louder and louder grew his humming; finally he began to sing.

How carefree it sounded, how happy! Every note was a stab, and still she listened: the song seemed to recall her entire life, everything!

How well she remembered it all, from the very first day she had seen him!

Louise called to her again, and she closed the window mechanically. But she did not go to bed. She sat down in a dark corner.

Ah yes, how well she remembered it all.

How clearly Aimée could visualize Fritz and Adolf, the first time they appeared, when they were to be "adopted" by Father Cecchi.

It was early, Louise and Aimée were still in bed.

The boys had stood in the corner, hanging their heads; they wore linen trousers, though it was midwinter, and Fritz had a straw hat.

Father Cecchi made them strip, and examined them carefully, pinching their legs and tapping their chests until they wept, while the old woman who had brought them, stood stiffly by, a shrivelled figure, mumbling to herself. Nothing about her moved, except the black flowers on her hat; these seemed to tremble a bit. She never asked a question, merely kept her eyes fixed on the boys, as they obeyed Cecchi's commands.

Aimée and Louise watched from the bed. Father Cecchi continued to probe and tap.

Finally they were "adopted."

The old woman never said a word. She did not touch the boys, nor say "good-bye" to them. She appeared, all the while her black flowers were quivering, to have been seeking something that she could not find. So she walked out of the door, slowly and uncertainly, closing it behind her.

Fritz gave a long scream, as if he had been stabbed.

Then he and Adolf walked back into the corner and sat down, their chins on their knees, their fists firmly braced against the floor, mute as statues.

Father Cecchi chased them into the kitchen to peel potatoes, sending Aimée and Louise after them. All four sat silently around the bowl.

"Where do you come from?" Louise asked. The boys did not answer. With tightly closed lips, they stared at the floor.

After a while, Aimée whispered: "Was that your mother?"

Still they did not answer, but sat with heaving breasts, sobbing to themselves. All that one heard, was the splash of the potatoes as they dropped into the water.

"Is she dead?" Louise whispered in her turn. The boys still made no answer, and the little girls kept looking from one to the other, until they began to cry softly, first Aimeé and then Louise.

The next day, the boys began to "work." They learned the Chinese Dance and the Peasants' Dance. Three weeks later the four of them "appeared" in public.

Whenever they were to dance, they stood in the wings, Aimée with Fritz, Louise with Adolf. Their eyes were fixed in a glassy stare; their tongues tried to moisten their lips, which were parched with fear, as they listened to the music of the orchestra.

"Pull your coat down," said Aimée, scarcely able to control her own feverish excitement, as she straightened Fritz's jacket, which had slipped.

"Commencez!" cried Cecchi from the first wings. The curtain went up; it was time to go on. They did not see the footlights; they did not see the people. With a terrified smile, they performed the steps in which they had been drilled, moving their lips as they counted the beats, their eyes riveted on Cecchi, who was beating time with his foot.

"To the left," Aimée whispered to Fritz, who was never quite sure of himself. She broke out in a cold perspiration — it was such an effort to remember for both of them.

The four children looked like little wax figures turning on a music box.

The audience applauded and gave them a curtain call. Oranges were thrown on to the stage. The children picked up the fruit, smiling gratefully, though they knew it must be handed over to father Cecchi, who ate the oranges, when he drank brandy and water in the evenings, and played cards with the agent, Watson.

Sometimes the two played all night in Cecchi's lodgings. Whenever they quarrelled, the children would awaken, looking at them wide-eyed, until they fell back into the deep slumber of exhaustion.

Time passed.

Cecchi's troupe joined a circus, and all four of them went through the mill. Rehearsals began at eight-thirty. With chattering teeth, they dressed, and began work in the dusk of the tent. Louise and Aimée walked the tight-rope, balancing with two flags, and father Cecchi, leaning against the railing, gave directions.

Then the horse was brought in, and Fritz was to execute the jockey-leap. Father Cecchi, with a long whip, shouted the commands. Fritz leaped and leaped — but in vain. He fell at the gate, and as he leaned

dizzily against the horse, the whip whistled through the air, raising long welts on the boy's legs.

Father Cecchi continued his commands. Fighting down his sobs, Fritz leaped again, and again. But he always missed and fell.

Old wounds on his body opened and bled so that his tights were spotted with blood.

And Father Cecchi kept crying, "Encore, encore!" Breathless, sobbing, the boy leaped, his face contorted with pain. The whip struck him, and in despair he screamed, "I can't!" But he had to try again.

The horse was beaten more than ever, and flew on with the sobbing child, whose limbs quivered with pain. "I can't, oh, I can't."

All the performers watched mutely from the boxes.

"Encore!" cried Cecchi. Fritz leaped again. Pale, with white lips, Aimée sat hidden, watching with horror and indignation. But Cecchi would not stop. It lasted over an hour, — an hour and a quarter. Fritz's body was one bleeding wound. He fell, and fell again, stamping his feet on the sand with anguish.

No, it could not be done. He was finally dismissed with a curse.

Aimée ran from the box; moaning with sympathy, she hid Fritz behind some barrel-staves. Breathless, with clenched hands, he sputtered curses — vulgar street words, phrases of the stable.

Aimée sat quite still. Only her white lips quivered.

For a long time they lay hidden back of that pile of staves. Fritz's head had dropped against the wall; he had fallen into the sleep of painful exhaustion, while Aimée, pale as a little spectre, sat watching over his sleep.

Years passed by. The four had at last grown up.

Father Cecchi was dead. He had been kicked to death by a horse.

But the four stuck together, through all the ups and downs that they encountered, sometimes working with large shows, sometimes with small.

How clearly Aimée could visualize the bare, whitewashed structure in that provincial town where they had worked one winter! How cold it was! Three braziers were brought in before the performance, filling the whole building with smoke, so that breathing became difficult. Out in the stalls stood the "artists," blue with the cold, holding their bare arms over a brazier, while the clowns leaped about the icy floor, in their cloth shoes, just to keep their feet warm.

The Cecchi troupe worked at various things. They danced, Fritz as Aimée's partner. Aimée was also première equestrienne, and Fritz, dressed as groom, tightened her saddle girth. The troupe worked hard, filling out a good half of the program.

But the show was a failure none the less. Every week another horse disappeared from the stalls, sold to buy fodder for the others. The perform-

ers who had money went away; those who were forced to remain went hungry, until the inevitable happened, and they were forced to close.

Horses, costumes, everything was taken from them. Representatives of the law had stepped in, and made a clean sweep.

The few performers who remained sat silent and disconsolate in the dark room. They couldn't leave. They did not even know where to go.

In the stable, on a feed box, the director sat in front of the empty stalls and wept, continuously mumbling a string of curses in any language that happened to occur to him.

Otherwise not a sound: the place was dead. Only the dogs, overlooked by the authorities, lay sadly on a pile of straw, with anxious, troubled eyes.

The Cecchi troupe entered the deserted restaurant. The proprietor had locked the buffet, and taken away the glasses. Tables and chairs, thick with dust, stood about in disorder.

The four sat down gloomily in a corner. They had just returned from their daily walk to the post-office. There were letters from various agents, but they contained only refusals.

Fritz opened and read them. The other three sat near, not daring to put a question. He opened one letter after another, slowly, apprehensively, read it, and laid it aside. The others watched in troubled silence.

Then he said: "Nothing."

And once more they sat in front of those fateful letters that brought nothing.

Finally Fritz burst out: "We cannot go on this way. We must try for a specialty." Adolf shrugged his shoulders. "Every line is overcrowded already," he said, adding sarcastically, "Invent something new, why don't you?"

"Trapeze work always means good pay," remarked Fritz in a suppressed voice.

The others made no reply, and Fritz said as before: "We could work in the cupolas."

Silence again. Then Adolf cried, almost angrily, "Are you so perfectly sure of your limbs?" Fritz did not answer, and gloomy silence fell once more.

"We might separate, you know," suggested Adolf hoarsely.

The same idea had occurred to them all, but each tried to avoid suggesting it. Now it was out, and Adolf added, gazing into the gloom of the deserted place, "One cannot be everlastingly starving at the same thing!"

He spoke in a suppressed, excited voice, like one who is debating the impossible; but Fritz continued silent and motionless, staring at the floor.

They rose and filed out mutely, through those long halls. How cold and dark they were!

Softly, in an almost inaudible voice, Aimée said to Fritz, who was walking beside her, "Fritz, I will work in the air with you."

Fritz stopped: "I knew it," he said softly, and squeezed her hand.

Louise and Adolf said nothing.

They decided to remain in the city. Fritz pawned their rings, as a last resort, and Adolf continued to communicate with the agents.

But Fritz and Aimée worked. They had put up their trapeze in the "Pantheon" and began to work regularly, every day. They adapted some floor exercises to the trapeze and tortured their sweating, aching bodies for hours on end. From time to time Fritz's commands could be heard; then they were forced to rest, sitting side by side on the same bar with tired, exhausted smiles.

As they grew accustomed to the work, they began the Hanlon-Volta exercises, attempting leaps from one swing to another, only to fall into the outstretched net. But they persevered, encouraging each other with cries of "en avant! Ça va! Encore!"

Fritz at last was able to make his distance. Aimée fell. But they kept on. Their very souls looked from their eyes, their muscles responded like steel springs, their voices rang like subdued battle cries. At last they both succeeded. One followed the other with rapt, feverish interest: "En avant! Du courage!"

Aimée had got across; her muscles quivered as she hung from the farthest trapeze. She tried again, and succeeded. A great joy overwhelmed her. Both of them became intoxicated by the strength of their bodies. They flew past each other; rested again, dripping with perspiration, but smiling happily, hand in hand. Overcome by their joy, they praised each other's bodies, stroked the muscles that had served them so well, and looked at one another with shining eyes.

"Ça va, ça va," they shouted, and laughed aloud. Then they began to try more difficult feats; they thought up new combinations. Planning and calculating, with the zeal of inventors they plunged into their practice, made plans, and tried all sorts of experiments. Fritz scarcely slept: thoughts of his work kept him awake at night.

In the morning, before sunrise, he was knocking at Aimée's door, to awaken her. Standing outside, while waiting for her to dress, he would elaborate his plans, explaining in a loud voice, while she, with equal eagerness, called back replies, their happy voices filling the house.

Louise sat up in bed rubbing her eyes. She had begun to attend their rehearsals, and became quite carried away by the rapid progress made by Aimée and Fritz. She called to them and applauded. Then they would reply from above, and the hall rang with their happy voices.

Only Adolf sat mutely in a corner near the stable. One day, he too, strolled in to watch, but no one said a word to him.

Practice over, their strength gave out, and they fell heavily into the net below; Fritz leaped to the ground and carefully lifted Aimée down, holding her in his outstretched arms like a child.

They changed their clothes and went into a little tavern across the way for dinner. They began to speak of the future: where they might get engagements, what salary they could demand, what name they should assume. They knew that success awaited them now.

The two silent ones became loquacious. They laughed, as they built up their future, and Fritz kept inventing new tricks, always new ones.

"If only we dared," said Fritz, his voice hoarse with eagerness, "if we only dared!"

And Aimée replied, looking straight at him, "Why not? If you are willing."

Something in her voice touched Fritz: "You are brave," he said, suddenly, and looked into those trusting eyes, shining into his. Whereupon they sat, with heads against the wall, gazing into space, weaving daydreams.

One day, they tried that last leap, the trick they had decided would be their great feature. They succeeded. Flying backwards, they reached the trapeze.

From below, they heard a shout. It was Adolf. With upturned face, and beaming eyes, he was crying, "Bravo, bravo," so that the empty hall reechoed. "Bravo," he cried once more, overcome with admiration.

And they began to discuss it, all four of them, from above and below, explaining and questioning.

On this day, they ate together, and on the next as well. They all talked about the tricks, as though all of them were taking part. Fritz exclaimed: "Oui, mes enfants, if only the four of us worked together. You two above with rigid bars, and we two below, with our death leap. Oh, if we could only do that!"

He began to explain his plan to them, meticulously outlining all details, but Adolf said nothing, and Louise made no reply.

Next day, however, Adolf asked, standing with downcast eyes and shuffling feet, "Are you going to practice this afternoon?"

No, they never rehearsed in the afternoon. "You see," added Adolf, "we are wasting time, our muscles are getting stiff."

That afternoon Adolf and Louise began to practice. The other two came and watched, encouraging, and directing. Fritz sat there happily, playing with Aimée's hand.

"Ça va, ça va," they both shouted from below.

Up above, Louise and Adolf were flying boldly from swing to swing.

Now, they knew, they would stay together.

Rehearsals were over at last, and their act was ready. They worked as Fritz had wished, called themselves The Four Devils, and had costumes designed and made to order in Berlin.

They made their début in Breslau. Then they travelled from city to city, and always enjoyed immense success.

Aimée had undressed and gone to bed. Sleepless she lay, staring into the darkness. Yes, how vividly it all came back, from the very first day. They had spent their entire lives together, side by side.

And now *she* had come, this stranger; and at the thought the acrobat girl ground her teeth in sheer, desperate, physical rage — yes, *she* had come to destroy him!

What did she want of him, with her cat's eyes? What did she want with her provoking smile? What did she want, and why did she offer herself to him like a common drab? To ruin him utterly, to snatch him from her, to destroy his strength: annihilate him.

Aimée bit into her sheet, wadded up her pillow, but could find no rest for her feverish hands. Her mind could not summon up enough angry rebukes or coarse accusations; she wept again, overcome by all that paralyzing misery that pursued her night and day.

Fritz lay with closed eyes, his head resting on the lap of his beloved.

More and more slowly her pointed nails glided over his fair hair.

Fritz lay with closed eyes, his head resting lightly in her lap. So this was real: he, Fritz Schmidt, a Frankfort street urchin, a fatherless boy, whose mother, one day, more drunk than usual, had jumped into the river, and whose grandmother had sold him and his brother together for twenty marks. So this was real: he, Fritz Schmidt, called Cecchi, of The Four Devils, had become her lover — the lover of The Lady in the Box. It was his neck that rested on her knees; his arm that encircled her body, his throat to which her lips were pressed.

He half opened his eyes, and saw with the same uncomprehending, intoxicated admiration, her delicate hand, so soft, so untouched by work, her arched fingernails, her delicate white skin, that he loved to kiss so long and tenderly.

Yes, it was he, Fritz Cecchi, who sensed the fragrance of her body, so close to him, who felt the texture of her clothing, delicate as clouds. How his hands loved to fondle her!

For him alone, she waited each night beside the high grating, shivering, as if with the cold. She led him into the little garden of the palace, and clung to him behind every clump of bushes. His lips she called her "blossom," his arms, her "despair." How strangely she spoke. It was all so queer!

Fritz Cecchi smiled and closed his eyes again. She saw the smile, bent over him, and passed her lips across his face. Fritz continued to smile, enchanted by this miracle.

"How strange this is," he murmured softly, and continued in the same tone, "How strange this is," turning his head slightly from side to side.

"What?" she asked.

"This," he replied, and again lay still, as if afraid of waking from a

dream. But he continued to smile, mentally repeating her name, over and over, surprised at it, for it was one of the great names of Europe, and had reached even him — like a legend.

Slowly he reopened his eyes, and looked at her. Then, laughing like a boy, he seized her two ears, squeezing them harder and harder. Even this was permitted him — even this.

He half rose, resting his head on her shoulder, and with the same smile, gazed about the room. He was lord of all this, all that belonged to her, the thousand fragile curiosities that covered the queer spindle-legged furniture, which at first he had scarcely dared to touch. He, the juggler, had fingered these objects gingerly, as if they would fall to pieces in his hands; but now he could gayly play ball with an art table or balance an entire what-not, while she laughed and laughed.

The paintings were strange to him — pictures of ancestors in the costume of the Restoration Period, with dress swords and gauntlets. There were moments when he laughed loudly at these portraits, like a street gamin, because he, Fritz Schmidt, was sitting here with her, the scion of such ancestors, and that she was now his very own.

Finally she asked, "What are you laughing at?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, and suddenly stopped, "how strange this is, how strange this is . . . "

He experienced a peculiar, half-happy, half-timid astonishment that he should be here — actually the master here.

For so he felt himself. Was she not his? In his uncultured brain still dwelt the thought of male possessing female; he, the active one, who in his consuming passion was still the dominant force.

But all these primitive conceptions disappeared, although Fritz had always prided himself on subduing and taming them. He became powerless and helpless in his silent renewed admiration of her, whose most insignificant words had a different sound and inflection; whose body was of such strange exotic perfection, so undeveloped and so delicate.

He grew tractable and timid; and suddenly opened his eyes to make sure that it was no dream, stroking her dainty, slender fingers. Yes, it was all true!

Her hands passed more and more uncertainly through his hair, while he lay, as if asleep.

"But what do you want of me?" he asked.

"You stupid man," she whispered, and put her mouth close to his cheek, "You stupid man." She continued to whisper; the sound of her voice excited him even more than her embraces, "You stupid man, you stupid man!"

Then he sat up, and pressing her head against his breast, looked at her with indescribable tenderness. "Could you sleep here?" he asked, and rocked her in his arms like a child, until their eyes met, and both of them laughed.

"You stupid man."

His eyes kindled; he seized her; and swiftly, without a word, carried her in his outstretched arms into the room beyond. There a pale blue lamp glowed like a sleepy eye.

Day broke as they parted. But in all corners, on the treads of the stairs, in the garden around the quiet house that looked so aristocratic and so honorable, they drew out the hours of their rendezvous, while she still whispered like a refrain, "You stupid man!"

At last Fritz tore himself away, and the iron door closed after him. But, seeing her standing still, he returned and once more took her in his arms. Suddenly he laughed aloud as he stood beside her in front of that great palace. As if their thoughts had met, she also laughed as she looked up at the home of her fathers.

And he began, feeling a delightful sense of triumph under his curiosity, to ask questions about each of the great stone escutcheons over the windows and the inscriptions on the gate posts. She answered him, still laughing.

The proudest names in all the land were there. He did not know them, but she told something about each one. It was a tale of battles, honors, victories. He laughed.

Here were shields which had defended the throne, escutcheons as old as the throne of St. Peter.

He laughed.

Inflamed by her own unworthiness, she grew more passionate in her endearments, coarse, almost blasphemous in this dawning light, while she continued her narrative, as if she wished in the telling, to tear down the coats-of-arms, and trample them in the mire of her love.

"And that one?" he asked. "And that?"

She went on telling him all about them. It was a tale of centuries. Here thrones had been established, there kingdoms had fallen. This man had been the friend of an emperor; that caused the death of a king. She went on and on, whispering with a teasing sort of scorn, while she leaned against the shoulder of the acrobat, and gave herself up entirely to this sensation of defilement.

He, too, became intoxicated by it.

It seemed as if both of them beheld this annihilation, and were enjoying it — enjoying from minute to minute, the fall of this great House, with its portals, escutcheons, shields, memorial tablets, and turrets, the collapse of this great House that was being ground beneath the wheels of their passion.

Finally she tore herself away and ran up the path. At the little door, she turned once again, and as a last joke, threw a mocking kiss at the coat-of-arms on the pediment.

Fritz went home, feeling as if he had wings on his feet. At the same time, he was intensely aware of all her endearments.

All around him, the great city was coming to life. Carts rumbled along the streets, laden with all the treasures of the flower market: violets, early roses, cowslips, forsythia.

Fritz began to sing. Under his breath, he hummed the words of the *Love Waltz:*

Amour, amour,
Oh, bel oiseau,
Chante, chante,
Chante toujours.

The carts clattered past him — the entire street was alive with fragrance. The flower venders who sat on the drivers' seats wrapped in great blankets, turned round and smiled at him.

He never stopped singing, until he reached the street where he lived. It was silent and still half dark, the houses stood so close and high. Fritz now walked more slowly. Still humming, he scanned the house, from top to bottom, before entering.

He gave a sudden start. Had he seen a face peering through the glass of an upper window?

Pale, with bated breath, Aimée listened at the door. Yes, that was he:

Amour, amour,
Oh, bel oiseau,
Chante, chante,
Chante toujours.

He locked his door and all was still.

As pale as a sleep-walker, her hands pressed against her heart, Aimée crept into bed. Motionless she lay, staring out into the gray light of the dawn.

It was late when Fritz Cecchi awoke, and on account of his exhaustion, consciousness returned very gradually, as he lay watching Adolf rubbing himself down with a wet towel.

"Are you really awake?" asked Adolf, sarcastically.

"Yes," was all Fritz answered, as he continued to watch his brother.

"It's high time you got up," added Adolf in the same tone.

"Yes," said Fritz, but continued, without moving, to stare at the strong, undefiled body of his brother, observing the lively play of the muscles.

Suddenly a blind anger, the bitter, miserable wrath of the vanquished, overcame him. He raised his arms, and felt their weakness, braced his feet against the foot-board, and realized the softness of the leg muscles. Straightway he was overwhelmed by a wild primitive resentment against himself, his body, his sex; above all against *her*, the thief, the robber, the Delilah!

His fury was unreasoning. All he knew was that he longed to beat her to

death, like a madman, with clenched fists; beat her to pieces while she shrieked and laughed; until she couldn't move, and then trample on her with both feet.

Again he raised his arms, clasping his hands; and again felt the impotence of the weakened muscles, as he gritted his teeth with rage.

Adolf walked out, banging the door behind him.

Then Fritz leaped from the bed, and began to examine his body. He attempted a number of exercises and failed. He tried floor gymnastics with no greater success. His weary limbs shook stubbornly. Again he tried, striking himself, pinching his flesh with his fingernails. In vain. He could do nothing. He beat his head against the wall, and tried again, only to fail.

Exhausted, he sat down before the great mirror, and went over every muscle of his inert and unstrung body.

Then it was true: they robbed one of everything, health, strength, muscular power! It was true! He would soon lose everything: work, position, reputation. Yes, it was true.

He would go the same road as the others, soon it would be all over with him. It would be with him as it was with *The Stars*, who had dragged two women from city to city, and beat them, until they had to be shut up in an insane asylum.

He would end like the juggler, Charles, who had lived with the singer Adelina; *his* limbs had grown soft as a drunkard's, and finally he had hanged himself.

Or Hubert, who had eloped with an innkeeper's wife, and now rode at county fairs; or the juggler, Paul, who had fallen for Anita, the knife-thrower, and was now barker for a tent show.

Yes, they made a wreck of one's body.

But he would not surrender. Frantically, he began again to torture his muscles in an effort to harness his strength; to spur on every fibre of his body. This time he succeeded.

Wildly, he slapped on his clothes, and scarcely buttoning them, dashed out. He must practice, practice in the circus, on the trapeze.

Adolf, Aimée, and Louise were already at work; he saw them hanging from the bars in their gray work-smocks.

Fritz changed his clothes and began some ground-work. He walked on his hands, balancing first on the right, then on the left, until all his body quivered.

The others watched silently from their swings.

Then, suddenly and eagerly, he swung himself up into the net opposite Aimée. Hanging by his arms, he took long swings, stretching his slender body into a straight line, and began.

Aimée sat motionless. With her heavy, sleepless eyes she stared steadily at this being that she loved, this man whom she adored, who had just come from a love night with another woman.

Had they not lived side by side for years? Had their bodies not touched every day? She measured him with her eyes: his neck that had carried her, his arms that had caught her, his thighs that she had clasped. All the routine of their calling, all the knowledge of their work, increased her misery.

Mute, overwhelmed by frightful suffering — actual physical suffering, that only she could feel — she stared at Fritz as he worked opposite her.

But it was Fritz himself who aroused her at last.

"Why don't you begin?" he asked harshly.

"Oh, yes."

She gave a start and mechanically rose in the swing. For an instant their eyes met, and in that fleeting second, seeing her pale face, staring eyes, and rigid, motionless body, Fritz realized everything.

At the same moment he was seized by an unconquerable disgust at the thought of coming in contact with the body of a woman — a feeling of revolt against touching any other than her whom he loved. There welled up within him an insurmountable, chilling repugnance amounting almost to hatred.

"Begin!" cried Adolf.

"Do begin," called Louise.

Still they hesitated. Then they flew and passed each other in the air. Deathly pale, they turned and flew again. He caught her, but she fell. They tried again, but he fell.

They began all over again, eye to eye, seeming to grow paler every moment. Both fell, Fritz first.

Louise and Adolf laughed aloud up on their swings.

"Well, this surely is your lucky day," Adolf called.

"Some one has given him the evil eye," Louise cried. And again they laughed together.

The other two continued their practice and failed again. Aimée let go, and Fritz scolded loudly down in the net. Finally they were all scolding, excited and angry, calling in loud shrill voices, — all but Aimée. She sat still with staring eyes, pale as death.

Fritz climbed back and they resumed work. Simultaneously the same rage flared up in both. Screaming they clutched each other, embracing wildly. It was no longer practice — it was a struggle. They no longer met, grasped, embraced; they wrestled rather, and seized one another like animals. Their bodies seemed aglow as they tested their strength in desperate battle. They did not stop. They no longer gave commands. Senselessly, blinded by brutal unconquerable hatred, they fought a desperate duel in the air.

Suddenly Aimée dropped with a scream. For a moment she lay motionless in the net. Fritz mounted to his swing, and with clenched teeth, his face set as a mask, regarded the woman he had vanquished.

He rose on the trapeze, announcing: "She cannot work any more. Let her take the upper swing; Louise can work here with me."

He spoke harshly, as though he had the right to command. No one replied, but slowly Louise began to glide from the dome to Aimée's swing. Aimée spoke not a word. Like a broken animal, she half raised herself in the net, and then climbed slowly up to the swing in the dome.

Work was resumed. But Fritz's strength was gone. His very bitterness reacted on him. His arms gave out; he fell, Louise falling upon him.

"What in the world is the matter with you?" cried Adolf. "Are you sick? You take the top; perhaps you can manage that. This will never do."

Fritz made no reply. He sat with bowed head, like one who has received a blow. Then he said, mumbling through clenched teeth, "Yes, we had better trade places — for today."

He climbed out of the net and walked away, the knuckles on his clenched hands glistening white. He thought he heard the attendants whispering his name, and sneaked past them, filled with shame, like a whipped dog.

In the dressing-room he dropped to the mattress. All sensation had left his body. He was conscious only of his eyes. How they smarted and burned! But there was no rest for him. He began to practice again. As one tortures an aching tooth, or presses one's finger on a boil, so he continued to test his weary limbs. He tried feverishly to execute this or that trick; but he could do nothing. Again he threw himself on the mattress, only to leap up and try again. These repeated struggles exhausted him completely, yet he refused to give up.

So the day passed. He never left the circus, but haunted the ring, like a bad conscience hovering about the scene of a crime.

In the evening he worked in the dome with Louise. He struggled like a maniac to make his stubborn limbs respond; desperately, he forced his quivering muscles to obey.

He succeeded: once, twice, again — He flew over, he flew back, then rested.

He saw nothing. Not the dome, nor the boxes, nor Adolf; only that distant trapeze, and Louise swinging in front of him. It seemed to him as though the pounding blood were going to burst his brain. Then he leaped, grasped for Louise's leg, and with a scream fell into the billowing net below.

There was not a sound in the whole huge building. All were silent, thinking he was dead.

Then Fritz lifted his shoulders. Where was he? With a tremendous effort, he recalled it all, — the arena, the net, the black frame-work of spectators, the boxes, and *her*. Overcome by despair, more through his humiliation than from the pain of the fall, he lifted his clenched fists and collapsed.

The three others had stopped their performance, and were calling con-

fusedly to each other. Adolf had at once dropped down a rope. He and two assistants lifted Fritz from the net, supporting him; so that he appeared to walk.

Finally Aimée slid slowly down the rope. She walked like a blind person, seeing nothing.

Two performers were standing at the entrance. "That net surely saved his life," said one.

"Yes, indeed," replied the other, "except for that, he would be cold and stiff by now."

Aimée gave a sudden start; she had heard the words, and as if she were seeing them for the first time, she measured with a single lingering glance the net, the ropes, and the swings — those fearfully high swings. One of the artists read her glance aright.

"They are damnably high," he said.

Aimée merely nodded, quite deliberately.

All was quiet again, and the performance continued.

In the dressing-room, Fritz had risen from the mattress and was standing before his mirror. He had not been injured, only stunned by the fall.

Adolf was busy dressing, and both were silent. Finally Adolf burst out: "You see for yourself, this can't go on."

Fritz did not answer, but averted his gaze from the pale face looking at him in the mirror. Just as Adolf was ready, they heard Louise rapping at the door.

"Won't you ever be ready?" demanded Adolf. "They are waiting for us."

Fritz took down his watch from the corner of the mirror, and went out to join the sisters, who were waiting in silence. They walked home in silence, too, Fritz beside Louise. The humiliation seared his very soul, as though it were a physical wound in his breast.

Fritz and Adolf had been in bed a long time, and Adolf was sleeping heavily with his mouth open, as acrobats usually do when their bodies lie relaxed in slumber. But Fritz could get no rest; he lay on his back, sleepless, in dull despair.

So it had happened, at last, and so soon! He was no longer fit for work. This one thought went round and round in his mind: no longer fit for work. Slowly, and with infinite weariness, he made it clear to himself, how it had all come about, day after day, night after night. Quietly and wearily, he visualized everything: the blue room, the high bed, himself and her; the yellow room with the lounge behind the screen, and the portraits on the wall, himself and her; the staircase where the lamp went out, himself and her; and the garden, in which he kept turning back.

And now it was all over. He was reaping what he had sown. Ah, he knew it well. Thus his thoughts kept drifting lazily, stupidly along. But even as he had been ruined so he would ruin her. Yes, he would do that.

Some night he would go there and unlock the door. Then when he was there with her (and his thoughts must pause to linger on the blue room, with himself and her), he would ring wildly to arouse the whole house, so that her husband and the servants and the maids should come and see her — *her!*

Yes, he could do this; he would! And suddenly, seeing it all before his eyes, he said: "That's what I'll do, and do it now!"

All repose left him. Why not do it now while the plan was fresh, his anger hot, his resolution strong? He would go immediately.

Rapidly, without turning on the light, he collected his clothes and dressed very quietly, in order not to awaken Adolf, while constantly before his eyes hovered the vision of himself and her in the middle of the blue room. There he would have his revenge.

In his haste, he knocked against a chair, and immediately sat down on the bed, overcome by fear lest Adolf might awake.

Then he went on dressing, with bated breath. He must go now!

A careless step disturbed Adolf, who, turning in bed, mumbled drowsily, "What the devil ails you?" And then added, "Where are you going?" Fritz did not answer. Half-dressed as he was, he crept under the bed clothes to hide, and found himself trembling like a trapped thief.

But soon after, hearing Adolf's regular breathing, he began again, dressing as he lay in bed, shivering with apprehension, as if he were stealing his own clothes.

Ready at last! He felt his way to the door, going carefully along the wall, crafty as a drunkard who is trying to creep towards his bottle without being seen.

And he succeeded in opening the door, closing it and sneaking down the stairs and out of the house. He felt that he had no more shame than a dog. He even said to himself, "Tomorrow I shan't be able to work, either." But with the logic of despair, he murmured, "I might as well go to the devil altogether."

He began to run faster and faster past the houses, keeping carefully in their shadows.

At home no one had heard him, except Aimée. She had gotten up and followed him, gliding down the stairs, out of the house, and along the other side of the street. Like one shadow pursuing another, she followed him through the silent streets.

Fritz reached the palace with the iron fence. He entered. His footsteps died away. Aimée stood hidden in a doorway opposite the palace window. She saw a light moving along the first floor, two shadows slipping past the lace curtains. There they were. The light reappeared, she saw the shadows again, upstairs. Then the light went out, and only a bluish glow glimmered in the last window.

With bated breath, in the throes of consuming jealousy, she stared at

those windows, while one picture after another came to torture her as she waited. All those mental visions that comprise the ultimate misery of the deserted, appeared before this acrobat girl, chaste though she still was. They seemed to be vividly depicted on that window pane, behind which *he* was, behind which *they* were, together. And her whole life that had been spent in self-sacrifice, her whole existence, filled with uncomplaining surrender, all her dearest hopes, all her tenderest thoughts, every dream for a life together vanished at once. Her whole life, bit by bit, memory after memory, thought upon thought, was shattered, engulfed, completely wiped out. Nothing was left her: no surrender, no tenderness, no willingness for sacrifice — nothing. How humiliated she felt, how alone; everything fell back into its elemental beginnings. There remained merely the all-powerful, all-destroying impulse.

Hours passed. Aimée felt she could suffer no more. Like a somnambulist she stared dully at the pale blue glow. Then the garden gate opened, and shut again. There he was! And Aimée in her agony, saw him walk slowly past her, a gray figure, in the gray light of the dawning day.

"Aimée," said Louise, as if she were trying to wake her sister, "are you asleep?" Aimée raised her arm automatically and bound up her long hair. "One would really think so," pursued Louise. Aimée was sitting in front of her mirror, in which she surveyed her reflection, without moving, as if two sleepers were staring at one another with open eyes.

Slowly she put on her blouse, got up, and went out with the same strange manner; it seemed as though she were following an apparition, she walked like an automaton, as if her soul had fallen asleep and her body were dead. Louise followed, and both went out into the dark place where Fritz was waiting on a swing. Aimée had never worked so well as she did today; in a mechanical rhythm she caught herself, let go, and flew. She was working with Fritz again, and her calmness seemed to react upon him. Like the lifeless cogs of a machine, they came together, separated, and came together again. Then they rested on opposite swings.

In all that great hall, Aimée's eyes were fixed on one thing, alone: his body. This agile body, this heaving breast, the gasping mouth, the hotly pulsating veins could all grow still and cold. His spring-like muscles, the hands that caught her, his neck, now so full of life, would all grow still and cold. His arms would be motionless, his muscles like stone, his forehead cold, his neck stiff and dead, his breast so high and still. Then his hand would drop, oh, so heavily if one were to lift it. Arms, legs, and hands — dead!

They worked again. They flew and then met. Every touch spurred her on: however warm he might be now, he should grow cold; however much he quivered now, he should suddenly become quite still. She no longer dwelt upon the reason, thought no more of herself. She saw always the vision of Fritz dead, — cold and lifeless. That was all.

And like one mentally deranged who keeps following his secret mania, she became sly and deceptive. Like an opium fiend, who lives only to satisfy his craving, she became wonderfully inventive. She developed the callousness of the monomaniac. She pursued Fritz whom she had so long shyly avoided. When the rehearsal was over, she commenced to work alone. She adapted all the exercises of the lower swings to the ones in the cupola. She called down to Fritz, detaining him in the ring, while she asked questions and solicited advice, flattering him as an apprentice does his master. She dared everything up there in the dome. She played with death, shamelessly enticing him. She kept watching his uncertainty, as if to gauge its extent. She sought help from the weakness that he tried so hard to hide. She attempted the most daring feats, crying: "We'll show them what we can do! We won't let them get ahead of us!"

So she lured him on. He gave advice, and finally climbed up the swaying rope to join her on the trapeze. Meanwhile she flew past him among the rattling swings. From trapeze to trapeze she flew over the yawning abyss. And he, driven by an irresistable impulse, began to follow her lead, while she spurred him on with her shouts. She had the strength of fever in her taut body, and he called upon his last ounce of endurance, as in a struggle for life and death.

She cried, "Ça va, ça va," and he swung into position and caught hold: "Ça va, ça va!"

The artists who were going in and out of the arena stood still to watch them. He grew ever more enthusiastic, daring all that she dared, as she led the way from swing to swing with wildly fluttering hair. They met and seized each other. How cold her body was!

Finally she stopped. But he continued practicing. She sat hunched on her swing, encouraging him with muffled growling comments. She sat in the dark and watched him. Fritz moaned, and in dropping seized the swinging rope, so that in the darkness, it looked as if he were falling all the way. Aimée remained on her swing. She heard him fall into the net, then walk out, over the soft sand of the ring.

It was dark. Only from the dome filtered down a subdued light. The whole tremendous building was wrapped in silence. Aimée continued to cower between the net and the rope; then she got up, making the hasps that held the swings and ropes rattle softly. She lifted and examined them; then, like a shadow, busied herself about something there in the dark. The brass knobs gleamed like cats' eyes, otherwise, all was dark. Softly the ropes rubbed against each other; that was the only sound.

Aimée busied herself for a long time up there in the dome. Then a loud voice sounded from below in the ring. It was Fritz, calling, "Aimée, Aimée!"

"I'm coming," she replied. Aimée seized the right hand rope, and slowly glided down hovering silently, for a moment, over the man waiting below.

Then she repeated, "I'm coming," and a moment later stood at his side.

The Four Devils were to have a benefit. It was the evening before, just after the performance; the audience was filing out of the circus. Adolf knocked on Aimée's and Louise's door, and all four of them walked along the hall. Not a word was spoken, and they quietly took their usual table in the restaurant. Their beer seidels were brought, and they drank in silence. Aimée's every motion, even the slightest like picking up her glass, seemed strangely deliberate and so slow it was as if she were doing everything to a dreary, measured tempo.

There was much noise in the restaurant. Bib and Bob were celebrating their birthday, and a circle of artists sat about their table. One of them was doing sleight-of-hand tricks, the clown Trip was imitating a certain Rigolo by coarsely swinging his hips from side to side. Only *The Devils* sat quietly in their corner. One by one, the ballet girls disappeared from their places along the wall, their anxious expectation relieved by the arrival of certain hurried gentlemen. At a side table some of the agents were playing cards.

The clowns continued their racket. One of them played an accordian, and half a dozen cri-cris replied. The clown Tom presented his colleague with a cabbage-head filled with snuff, and everyone began to sniffle and sneeze, in chorus. On a table, Trip was still imitating the evolutions of Rigolo.

But the *Devils* kept quiet.

The billposter came in with his jar and handbag, and began to paste up the next day's announcements on both bulletin boards. The name *Les Quatre Diables* appeared in three places.

Adolf got up and strolled over to inspect the program. He asked one of the agents to translate it, and the latter rose from the card table and slowly translated, while Adolf listened attentively.

"Assuring our honored audience and all our patrons that for this performance we shall offer everything in our power, we subscribe ourselves, respectfully,

Les Quatre Diables."

Adolf nodded as he followed the strange text word for word. Then he returned to his table, still staring at the placard with its peculiar lettering, finally remarking with a satisfied look: "Pretty lettering."

Louise and Fritz got up, too, and walked over to inspect it.

The cri-cris shrieked, enough to burst one's ear-drums. The clown Tom evoked music from little reed instruments which he inserted in his nostrils.

Even Aimée had risen. She stood behind Fritz and Louise, while the agent proceeded to translate the words over again:

"we subscribe ourselves respectfully,
Les Quatre Diables."

The cri-cris shrieked. Up on top of the table Trip continued his ridiculous gymnastics.

Then Aimée who was the last to join in, laughed loud and long, while the din gradually subsided, and the *Devils* went back to their places. Adolf took out the money, and pushed it over beside the seidels. The three others rose, but Fritz announced his intention of staying a little longer. He was not ready to go home.

"Good night," said Adolf and Louise.

"Good night," replied Fritz without moving. Aimée stood still. For a moment, she watched him appraisingly, as if she were haunted by the remembrance of the night before.

"A demain, Aimée," he said airily.

Slowly she turned her eyes aside and murmured, "good night."

She went out into the great hall, where it was dark. The sign poster had left his lantern on the floor, and in its glow the yellow paper of the billboard stood out. The two others were waiting in the doorway, but she followed them alone, past the tall silent houses. The windows looked down at her from massive stone façades with unfamiliar eyes. How clear the sky was! Aimée looked at the stars: she had been told they were worlds, other worlds, perhaps like ours.

Her gaze returned to the houses, doors, windows, lanterns, and paving stones; how strange they looked; she seemed to be seeing them for the first time.

"Aimée," called Louise.

"Yes, I'm coming." And again she stared at the rows of houses, dark and closed, between which their steps died away. Back of her, she faintly heard the cri-cris, the laughter of the clowns.

"Aimée," called Louise once more.

"Yes." Aimée overtook the others again. The two were standing arm in arm in the light of a street lamp, waiting for her. Louise threw back her head with an impatient little sigh.

"Good heavens," she exclaimed, "aren't you coming at all?" And leaning on Adolf's arm, under the glow of the lantern, she looked down the dead and unfamiliar street, through which they had just come, and remarked: "I like a street like this." Then with a laugh, she began to repeat those highly amusing words: "we subscribe ourselves respectfully," adding as an afterthought, as she looked down the dark street, "I wonder what it's called?"

"Oh," replied Adolf, "one passes so many little streets." And they went on, past the next row of houses.

Fritz had remained behind. The others at the clown table had invited

him to have a glass of beer, but he shook his head. One of the clowns called out, "He has something better. Good-night!" And all of them burst out laughing. By this time, Bib and Bob had constructed a fishing rod, and were angling all the artists' hats down from the clothes racks.

Fritz got up and strolled over to the door that opened directly on the street. He sat down at a table on the terrace under some laurel trees. An intense feeling of boredom, an indescribable disgust overwhelmed him. He watched the whispering couples who were walking up and down, affectionately close to each other. In the dark, they occasionally kissed, and laughed lovingly. The women pirouetted, and the men strutted and showed off like beasts of the field in the mating season.

Suddenly Fritz gave a sharp, harsh laugh.

He thought of the clown Tim, whom they called The Gentleman With the Dogs. Yes, Tim was right. He visualized Tim with his quiet, motionless, melancholy features, like a statue's with the delicate, red, curved, and pathetic mouth — a woman's mouth, it was.

Fritz recalled him at home in his lodgings, in his big room, where he had constructed an entire house for his dogs, a two-story house in which all the dogs lived. There lay the animals, each in his own little cubicle, their heads thrust through the openings, staring into space with eyes as pathetic as those of the clown himself. And he had sat in their midst. What a quiet company it was! All these dogs had been castrated, — and Tim thought them more human than people. Yes, he was right: people are animals, and the moments in which we really *live* are bestial.

They are animals, that want to be satisfied; they are fools, all of them.

We take care of ourselves, working with the most tremendous effort. We give days, years, our youth, our strength, the freshness of our brain, and one day the animal in us rears his head — the fundamental animal that is in us all.

Fritz laughed. Involuntarily he was conscious of his body, of which he had taken such meticulous care all his life, and which he had ruined in the last three months.

One of the artists came out of the door. He waited a moment, then his wife joined him, and they trotted awkwardly down the sidewalk. Fritz looked after them and continued to laugh. How about those who get married? Didn't they sacrifice their bodies, when they mated for life, ate their daily bread, and had children? Like fat drones they swelled up; developed paunches through their regular habits of life. And they raised children to carry on this existence.

Fools, fools!

Fritz stood looking after the strolling couples that grew more and more affectionate, and disappeared into the shadows.

Within, the clowns continued their racket. The cri-cris shrieked, the sound floating over the heads of all, and reaching the people in the street, like a hymn to foolishness.

Fritz got up, and tossing a coin on the table, walked away. In the restaurant the noise increased. They howled, screamed, and laughed. Fritz began to sing. Whistling, screeching, cackling, they all joined in. With clownish grimaces, gestures of the ring, and mouths awry, they began to sing:

Amour, amour,
Oh, bel oiseau,
Chante, chante,
Chante toujours.

Outside on the terrace everyone stood still, the couples peeped in at the windows, laughing merrily. Then two or three of them took up the melody of the clowns. Far out into the darkness, floated the air:

Amour, amour,
Oh, bel oiseau,
Chante, chante,
Chante toujours.

From out on the terrace Fritz watched the ridiculous clowns within, and the amorous couples without, all swaying their heads in time to the music. Suddenly the acrobat began to laugh, wildly, insanely, unable to control himself, as he leaned against a lamp post for support.

A policeman walked up to him, and stared surprised at this gentleman in a high hat who was disturbing the peace. But the gentleman continued to laugh hysterically, as he tried to sing:

Amour, amour,
Oh, bel oiseau,
Chante, chante,
Chante toujours.

Then even the policeman began to laugh, without realizing why, as the song swelled lustily within.

Fritz turned sharply on his heel and went — to her.

The applause resounded, and Louise appeared again.

Then the attendants began to fold up the big net. It sounded like the furling of the mainsail. The music had stopped.

"Monsieur Fritz and Mademoiselle Aimée are going to perform their great leap without the net."

Several attendants began to rake the sand of the ring. Now all was ready. Like a guard at salute, the attendants waited, while the strains of *The Love Waltz* were heard again.

Fritz and Aimée entered hand in hand. Bowing their thanks, they stood amid the flowers that had been tossed to them. Then they climbed up the long ropes, followed by thousands of eyes.

For an instant, they rested side by side.

A shudder swept over the crowd, as Fritz let go and flew across.

Never before had they worked more surely. In the breathless hush, their hands grasped the rattling swings squarely and firmly.

Fritz flew over and back. Aimée's eyes were fixed upon him, large and dull, like two lamps about to go out.

The waltz swelled louder; the play of the swings more violent.

As from a single, suffocating breast, came an apprehensive murmur of applause.

Aimée unbound her hair, as if she wished to wrap herself in a dark cloak. Standing upright, she waited in the swing for Fritz.

Their great leaps now began. They flew, they rushed across. Their words sounded like bird cries above the music, and thousands watched in troubled bewilderment.

"Aimée, du courage!"

He flew.

"Enfin du courage!"

He seized the bar again.

Aimée saw only him, his body fairly seemed to glow. The applause resounded once more, while the waltz swelled, fairly triumphed.

Fritz was waiting for her.

Aimée knew nothing more, except that suddenly she raised her hand, and swung far out on the swaying bar, unfastened the hasp on which it hung.

And Fritz flew over.

She saw no more; there was no scream. Only a sound as if a bag of sand had struck the floor.

For the fraction of a second Aimée waited on her swing: now she knew that death was a delight. She let go, screamed and plunged into the chasm below.

As if all bonds had burst, hundreds had fled in horror. Men leaped the barriers and dashed off, women streamed through the aisles in flight. No one waited, everyone fled. The women screamed as if they were being stabbed.

Three physicians ran up, and knelt beside the bodies.

Then everything was still. As if they wished to hide, the performers crept into their dressing-rooms, shuddering at every sound.

An attendant whispered something to the physicians. The bodies were picked up and laid upon the same piece of canvas. Silently they were carried out, through the aisle, through the stable, where the horses became restless in their stalls. The artists followed, a queer procession of mourners, in the various costumes of the pantomime.

The big baggage van stood ready. Adolf got in and placed them on the floor, side by side in the dark, first Aimée, then his brother. How dully their hands dropped back to the floor of the baggage wagon.

Then the door was closed.

A woman shrieked, and rushing forward, clung to the wagon. It was Louise. They slowly carried her away.

Just then one of the waiters from the restaurant came running along the cold, bare hall, frightened, as if he had seen a ghost amid all this brightness.

He was calling for a doctor. A woman, he said, was lying in convulsions in the restaurant. One of the three physicians ran up, and a carriage was sent for. It drove up, with gorgeous escutcheons on the panels, and a lady was led out to it, supported by the physician.

Her equipage was forced to wait a moment. The narrow street was blocked by the big baggage van.

Then the equipage passed it and drove on.

In the street were bright lights and a great crowd. Two young men were standing under a lantern. With happy watchful glances they surveyed the busy square. Two others walked up to them, and related the "event." They cursed a little; all was described with much gesticulation. Then the two news-carriers moved on.

The first two gentlemen stood still. One of them struck the paving stones with his stick.

"Well," he said, "mon dieu, les pauvres diables."

And forthwith, their eyes fixed on the milling crowd, they began to hum:

Amour, amour,
Oh, bel oiseau,
Chante, chante,
Chante toujours.

Their silver-headed canes gleamed. The young men sauntered away in their long coats.

Amour, amour,
Oh, bel oiseau,
Chante, chante,
Chante toujours.

The United States

INTRODUCTION

THERE was very little original fiction in the literature of the United States before the Revolution, and not much more before the advent of Washington Irving, Hawthorne, and Poe in the first part of the Nineteenth Century, although Charles Brockden Brown is usually considered the first American novelist. Fenimore Cooper, a few years Brown's junior, won international fame by his long novels of Indian and pioneer life, but he made no attempt to write shorter works of fiction. Washington Irving was the first to succeed in the short novel form: his *Rip Van Winkle* is a particularly happy example. Poe was, of course, supreme as a short story writer, and so was Hawthorne, but the former tried his hand at only one narrative that was not, strictly speaking, a short story. Hawthorne, on the other hand, was probably greater as a novelist than as a short story writer. Among the more important of Poe's followers were Rose Terry Cooke, and Fitz-James O'Brien, both short story writers.

From the days of Poe down to the present time a host of writers have brought the short story to a high point of technical excellence. Among these were Frank R. Stockton, H. C. Bunner, Mark Twain, W. D. Howells, Sarah Orne Jewett, Bret Harte, Henry James and O. Henry. The best traditions of the past have been carried on by such writers as Willa Cather and Sherwood Anderson.

The short novel was a favorite with Henry James. Some of his most distinguished work he cast in this form. *Daisy Miller* is one of the finest examples of the form in the whole range of American literature. Both Mary E. Wilkins Freeman and Lafcadio Hearn have been equally successful in the short story and the short novel forms.

Of all the recent writers Joseph Hergesheimer has best understood the short novel. His early work includes two or three of the best short novels in American literature.

WASHINGTON IRVING

(1783–1859)

Washington Irving was born in New York City in 1783, during the British occupation. He spent most of the years of his maturity abroad, in the diplomatic service. He was the author of numerous historical, descriptive and biographical works, but the most popular and beloved of all his writings is *The Sketch Book,* originally published in 1819.

Rip Van Winkle is the shortest narrative in the present collection. In spite of its brevity, it is in conception a short novel.

It is reprinted, with modernised spelling, from *The Sketch Book,* New York, 1919.

RIP VAN WINKLE

A Posthumous Writing of Diedrich Knickerbocker

> By Woden, God of Saxons,
> From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodensday,
> Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
> Unto thylke day in which I creep into
> My sepulchre. — Cartwright.

WHOEVER has made a voyage up the Hudson, must remember the Kaatskill mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains; and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapours about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village of great antiquity, having

been founded by some of the Dutch colonists, in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant (may he rest in peace!) and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weathercocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple, good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man; he was moreover a kind neighbour, and an obedient henpecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation, and a curtain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favourite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles, and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossippings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighbourhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labour. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbour, even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn or building stone fences. The women of the village, too, used to employ him

to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them; — in a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighbourhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family.

Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife, so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house — the only side which, in truth, belongs to a henpecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much henpecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honourable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods — but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house, his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van

Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle, as years of matrimony rolled on: a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edge tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village, which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of his majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade, of a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions which sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands, from some passing traveller. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junta were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun, and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbours could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial. It is true, he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent, and angry puffs; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds, and sometimes taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapour curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this strong hold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage, and call the members all to nought; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair, and his only alternative to escape from the labour of the farm and the clamour of his wife, was to take gun in hand, and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it;

but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee! " Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and if dogs can feel pity, I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind, on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill mountains. He was after his favourite sport of squirrel-shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and re-echoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees, he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village; and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend he heard a voice from a distance hallooing, " Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle! " He looked around, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air, " Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle! " — at the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him: he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place, but supposing it to be some one of the neighbourhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach, he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion — a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist — several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulders a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and

assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity, and mutually relieving each other, they clambored up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine or rather cleft between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which, impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky, and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time, Rip and his companion had laboured on in silence; for though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe, and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at nine-pins. They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion: some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches, of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar; one had a large head, broad face, and small piggish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colours. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting, in the parlour of Dominie Van Schaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip, was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such a fixed statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon

the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees, Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavour of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another, and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often, that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll from whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes — it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with the keg of liquor — the mountain ravine — the wild retreat among the rocks — the wo-begone party at nine-pins — the flagon — "Oh! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip — "what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle?"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel encrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roysters of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him, and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip, "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen; he found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel; and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grape vines that twisted their coils and tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad deep basin, black from

the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? The morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village, he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture, induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs too, not one of which he recognised for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered: it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors — strange faces at the windows — everything was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but a day before. There stood the Kaatskill mountains — there ran the silver Hudson at a distance — there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been — Rip was sorely perplexed — "That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly!"

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay — the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog, that looked like Wolf, was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed. — "My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial fears — he called loudly for his wife and children; the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn — but it too was gone. A large rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken, and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, " The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red night-cap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes — all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognised on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe, but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco smoke, instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of handbills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens — election — members of Congress — liberty — Bunker's hill — heroes of seventy-six — and other words that were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long, grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and the army of women and children that had gathered at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians. They crowded round him, eyeing him from head to foot, with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and drawing him partly aside, inquired, " on which side he voted? " Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, " whether he was Federal or Democrat." Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm a-kimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, " what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village? "

" Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, " I am a poor, quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the King, God bless him! "

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders — " a tory! a tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him! "

It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit, what he came there for, and whom he was seeking. The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbours, who used to keep about the tavern.

" Well — who are they? — name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, " Where's Nicholas Vedder? "

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin, piping voice, " Nicholas Vedder? why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tomb-stone in the church-yard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

" Where's Brom Dutcher? "

" Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony-Point — others say he was drowned in the squall, at the foot of Antony's Nose. I don't know — he never came back again."

" Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster? "

" He went off to the wars, too; was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away, at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him, too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war — Congress — Stony-Point! — he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, " Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle? "

" Oh, Rip Van Winkle! " exclaimed two or three. " Oh to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself as he went up the mountain; apparently as lazy and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

" God knows," exclaimed he at his wit's end; " I'm not myself — I'm somebody else — that's me yonder — no — that's somebody else, got into my shoes — I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and every thing's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am! "

The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief; at the very suggestion of which, the self-important man with the cocked

hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh comely woman passed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. " Hush, Rip," cried she, " hush, you little fool; the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind.

" What is your name, my good woman? " asked he.

" Judith Gardenier."

" And your father's name? "

" Ah, poor man, his name was Rip Van Winkle; it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since — his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice:

" Where's your mother? "

Oh, she too had died but a short time since: she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New-England pedlar.

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. " I am your father! " cried he — " Young Rip Van Winkle once — old Rip Van Winkle now! — Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle! "

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, " Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle — it is himself. Welcome home again, old neighbour — Why, where have you been these twenty long years? "

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbours stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks; and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head — upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighbourhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great Hendrick

Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half-moon, being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river and the great city called by his name. That his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at nine-pins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug, well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but evinced a hereditary disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favour.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can do nothing with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench, at the inn door, and was reverenced as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times " before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How that there had been a revolutionary war — that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England — and that, instead of being a subject of his majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was — petticoat government. Happily, that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes; which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was doubtless owing to his having so recently awakened. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighbourhood, but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty.

The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day, they never hear a thunder-storm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of nine-pins: and it is a common wish of all henpecked husbands in the neighbourhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

HENRY JAMES

(1843–1915)

Henry James was born in New York City in 1843. His earliest schooling was received in Europe. On his return to America he began writing, but in the early Seventies he settled in England where, except for short trips to his native land and elsewhere, he spent the remainder of his life. Not long before his death he became a British subject.

James devoted his life to the writing of a long series of novels, stories, and tales, mostly about modern Americans abroad, and English people at home.

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DAISY MILLER

Part I

AT THE little town of Vevay, in Switzerland, there is a particularly comfortable hotel. There are, indeed, many hotels; for the entertainment of tourists is the business of the place, which, as many travellers will remember, is seated upon the edge of a remarkably blue lake — a lake that it behooves every tourist to visit. The shore of the lake presents an unbroken array of establishments of this order, of every category, from the "grand hotel" of the newest fashion, with a chalk-white front, a hundred balconies, and a dozen flags flying from its roof, to the little Swiss *pension* of an elder day, with its name inscribed in German-looking lettering upon a pink or yellow wall, and an awkward summer-house in the angle of the garden. One of the hotels at Vevay, however, is famous, even classical, being distinguished from many of its upstart neighbors by an air both of luxury and of maturity. In this region, in the month of June, American travellers are extremely numerous; it may be said, indeed, that Vevay assumes at this period some of the characteristics of an American watering-place. There are sights and sounds which evoke a vision, an echo, of Newport and Saratoga. There is a flitting hither and thither of "stylish" young girls, a rustling of muslin flounces, a rattle of dance-music in the morning hours, a sound of high-pitched voices at all times. You receive an impression of these things at the excellent inn of the Trois Couronnes, and are

transported in fancy to the Ocean House or to Congress Hall. But at the Trois Couronnes, it must be added, there are other features that are much at variance with these suggestions: neat German waiters, who look like secretaries of legation; Russian princesses sitting in the garden; little Polish boys walking about, held by the hand, with their governors; a view of the sunny crest of the Dent du Midi and the picturesque towers of the Castle of Chillon.

I hardly know whether it was the analogies or the differences that were uppermost in the mind of a young American, who, two or three years ago, sat in the garden of the Trois Couronnes, looking about him, rather idly, at some of the graceful objects I have mentioned. It was a beautiful summer morning, and in whatever fashion the young American looked at things they must have seemed to him charming. He had come from Geneva the day before by the little steamer to see his aunt, who was staying at the hotel — Geneva having been for a long time his place of residence. But his aunt had a headache — his aunt had almost always a headache — and now she was shut up in her room, smelling camphor, so that he was at liberty to wander about. He was some seven-and-twenty years of age. When his friends spoke of him, they usually said that he was at Geneva "studying;" when his enemies spoke of him, they said — but, after all, he had no enemies; he was an extremely amiable fellow, and universally liked. What I should say is, simply, that when certain persons spoke of him they affirmed that the reason of his spending so much time at Geneva was that he was extremely devoted to a lady who lived there — a foreign lady — a person older than himself. Very few Americans — indeed, I think none — had ever seen this lady, about whom there were some singular stories. But Winterbourne had an old attachment for the little metropolis of Calvinism; he had been put to school there as a boy, and he had afterwards gone to college there — circumstances which had led to his forming a great many youthful friendships. Many of these he had kept, and they were a source of great satisfaction to him.

After knocking at his aunt's door, and learning that she was indisposed, he had taken a walk about the town, and then he had come in to his breakfast. He had now finished his breakfast; but he was drinking a small cup of coffee, which had been served to him on a little table in the garden by one of the waiters who looked like an attaché. At last he finished his coffee and lit a cigarette. Presently a small boy came walking along the path — an urchin of nine or ten. The child, who was diminutive for his years, had an aged expression of countenance: a pale complexion, and sharp little features. He was dressed in knickerbockers, with red stockings, which displayed his poor little spindle-shanks; he also wore a brilliant red cravat. He carried in his hand a long alpenstock, the sharp point of which he thrust into everything that he approached — the flower-beds, the garden-

benches, the trains of the ladies' dresses. In front of Winterbourne he paused, looking at him with a pair of bright, penetrating little eyes.

"Will you give me a lump of sugar?" he asked, in a sharp, hard little voice — a voice immature, and yet, somehow, not young.

Winterbourne glanced at the small table near him, on which his coffee-service rested, and saw that several morsels of sugar remained. "Yes, you may take one," he answered; "but I don't think sugar is good for little boys."

This little boy stepped forward and carefully selected three of the coveted fragments, two of which he buried in the pocket of his knickerbockers, depositing the other as promptly in another place. He poked his alpenstock, lance-fashion, into Winterbourne's bench, and tried to crack the lump of sugar with his teeth.

"Oh, blazes; it's har-r-d!" he exclaimed, pronouncing the adjective in a peculiar manner.

Winterbourne had immediately perceived that he might have the honor of claiming him as a fellow-countryman. "Take care you don't hurt your teeth," he said, paternally.

"I haven't got any teeth to hurt. They have all come out. I have only got seven teeth. My mother counted them last night, and one came out right afterwards. She said she'd slap me if any more came out. I can't help it. It's this old Europe. It's the climate that makes them come out. In America they didn't come out. It's these hotels."

Winterbourne was much amused. "If you eat three lumps of sugar, your mother will certainly slap you," he said.

"She's got to give me some candy, then," rejoined his young interlocutor. "I can't get any candy here — any American candy. American candy's the best candy."

"And are American little boys the best little boys?" asked Winterbourne.

I don't know. I'm an American boy," said the child.

I see you are one of the best!" laughed Winterbourne.

"Are you an American man?" pursued this vivacious infant. And then, on Winterbourne's affirmative reply — "American men are the best!" he declared.

His companion thanked him for the compliment; and the child, who had now got astride of his alpenstock, stood looking about him, while he attacked a second lump of sugar. Winterbourne wondered if he himself had been like this in his infancy, for he had been brought to Europe at about this age.

"Here comes my sister!" cried the child, in a moment. "She's an American girl."

Winterbourne looked along the path and saw a beautiful young lady

advancing. " American girls are the best girls! " he said, cheerfully, to his young companion.

" My sister ain't the best! " the child declared. " She's always blowing at me."

" I imagine that is your fault, not hers," said Winterbourne. The young lady meanwhile had drawn near. She was dressed in white muslin, with a hundred frills and flounces, and knots of pale-colored ribbon. She was bareheaded; but she balanced in her hand a large parasol, with a deep border of embroidery; and she was strikingly, admirably pretty. " How pretty they are! " thought Winterbourne, straightening himself in his seat, as if he were prepared to rise.

The young lady paused in front of his bench, near the parapet of the garden, which overlooked the lake. The little boy had now converted his alpenstock into a vaulting-pole, by the aid of which he was springing about in the gravel, and kicking it up a little.

" Randolph," said the young lady, " what *are* you doing? "

" I'm going up the Alps," replied Randolph. " This is the way! " And he gave another little jump, scattering the pebbles about Winterbourne's ears.

" That's the way they come down," said Winterbourne.

" He's an American man! " cried Randolph, in his little hard voice.

The young lady gave no heed to this announcement, but looked straight at her brother. " Well, I guess you had better be quiet." she simply observed.

It seemed to Winterbourne that he had been in a manner presented. He got up and stepped slowly towards the young girl, throwing away his cigarette. " This little boy and I have made acquaintance," he said, with great civility. In Geneva, as he had been perfectly aware, a young man was not at liberty to speak to a young unmarried lady except under certain rarely occurring conditions; but here at Vevay, what conditions could be better than these? — a pretty American girl coming and standing in front of you in a garden. This pretty American girl, however, on hearing Winterbourne's observation, simply glanced at him; she then turned her head and looked over the parapet, at the lake and the opposite mountains. He wondered whether he had gone too far; but he decided that he must advance farther, rather than retreat. While he was thinking of something else to say, the young lady turned to the little boy again.

" I should like to know where you got that pole? " she said.

" I bought it," responded Randolph.

" You don't mean to say you're going to take it to Italy? "

" Yes, I am going to take it to Italy," the child declared.

The young girl glanced over the front of her dress, and smoothed out a knot or two of ribbon. Then she rested her eyes upon the prospect again. " Well, I guess you had better leave it somewhere," she said, after a moment.

"Are you going to Italy?" Winterbourne inquired, in a tone of great respect.

The young lady glanced at him again. "Yes, sir," she replied. And she said nothing more.

"Are you — a — going over the Simplon?" Winterbourne pursued, a little embarrassed.

"I don't know," she said. "I suppose it's some mountain. Randolph, what mountain are we going over?"

"Going where?" the child demanded.

"To Italy," Winterbourne explained.

"I don't know," said Randolph. "I don't want to go to Italy. I want to go to America."

"Oh, Italy is a beautiful place!" rejoined the young man.

"Can you get candy there?" Randolph loudly inquired.

"I hope not," said his sister. "I guess you have had enough candy, and mother thinks so, too."

"I haven't had any for ever so long — for a hundred weeks!" cried the boy, still jumping about.

The young lady inspected her flounces and smoothed her ribbons again, and Winterbourne presently risked an observation upon the beauty of the view. He was ceasing to be embarrassed, for he had begun to perceive that she was not in the least embarrassed herself. There had not been the slightest alteration in her charming complexion; she was evidently neither offended nor fluttered. If she looked another way when he spoke to her, and seemed not particularly to hear him, this was simply her habit, her manner. Yet, as he talked a little more, and pointed out some of the objects of interest in the view, with which she appeared quite unacquainted, she gradually gave him more of the benefit of her glance; and then he saw that this glance was perfectly direct and unshrinking. It was not, however, what would have been called an immodest glance, for the young girl's eyes were singularly honest and fresh. They were wonderfully pretty eyes; and, indeed, Winterbourne had not seen for a long time anything prettier than his fair countrywoman's various features — her complexion, her nose, her ears, her teeth. He had a great relish for feminine beauty; he was addicted to observing and analyzing it; and as regards this young lady's face he made several observations. It was not at all insipid, but it was not exactly expressive; and though it was eminently delicate, Winterbourne mentally accused it — very forgivingly — of a want of finish. He thought it very possible that Master Randolph's sister was a coquette; he was sure she had a spirit of her own; but in her bright, sweet, superficial little visage there was no mockery, no irony. Before long it became obvious that she was much disposed towards conversation. She told him that they were going to Rome for the winter — she and her mother and Randolph. She asked him if he was a "real American"; she shouldn't have taken him

for one; he seemed more like a German — this was said after a little hesitation — especially when he spoke. Winterbourne, laughing, answered that he had met Germans who spoke like Americans; but that he had not, so far as he remembered, met an American who spoke like a German. Then he asked her if she should not be more comfortable in sitting upon the bench which he had just quitted. She answered that she liked standing up and walking about ; but she presently sat down. She told him she was from New York State — " if you know where that is." Winterbourne learned more about her by catching hold of her small, slippery brother, and making him stand a few minutes by his side.

" Tell me your name, my boy," he said.

" Randolph C. Miller," said the boy, sharply. " And I'll tell you her name; " and he levelled his alpenstock at his sister.

" You had better wait till you are asked! " said this young lady, calmly.

" I should like very much to know your name," said Winterbourne.

" Her name is Daisy Miller! " cried the child. " But that isn't her real name; that isn't her name on her cards."

" It's a pity you haven't got one of my cards! " said Miss Miller.

" Her real name is Annie P. Miller," the boy went on.

" Ask him *his* name," said his sister, indicating Winterbourne.

But on this point Randolph seemed perfectly indifferent; he continued to supply information in regard to his own family. " My father's name is Ezra B. Miller," he announced. " My father ain't in Europe; my father's in a better place than Europe."

Winterbourne imagined for a moment that this was the manner in which the child had been taught to intimate that Mr. Miller had been removed to the sphere of celestial rewards. But Randolph immediately added, " My father's in Schenectady. He's got a big business. My father's rich, you bet! "

" Well! " ejaculated Miss Miller, lowering her parasol and looking at the embroidered border. Winterbourne presently released the child, who departed, dragging his alpenstock along the path. " He doesn't like Europe," said the young girl. " He wants to go back."

" To Schenectady, you mean? "

" Yes; he wants to go right home. He hasn't got any boys here. There is one boy here, but he always goes round with a teacher; they won't let him play."

" And your brother hasn't any teacher? " Winterbourne inquired.

" Mother thought of getting him one to travel round with us. There was a lady told her of a very good teacher; an American lady — perhaps you know her — Mrs. Sanders. I think she came from Boston. She told her of this teacher, and we thought of getting him to travel round with us. But Randolph said he didn't want a teacher travelling round with us. He said he wouldn't have lessons when he was in the cars. And we

are in the cars about half the time. There was an English lady we met in the cars — I think her name was Miss Featherstone; perhaps you know her. She wanted to know why I didn't give Randolph lessons — give him 'instructions,' she called it. I guess he could give me more instruction than I could give him. He's very smart."

"Yes," said Winterbourne; "he seems very smart."

"Mother's going to get a teacher for him as soon as we get to Italy. Can you get good teachers in Italy?"

"Very good, I should think," said Winterbourne.

"Or else she's going to find some school. He ought to learn some more. He's only nine. He's going to college." And in this way Miss Miller continued to converse upon the affairs of her family, and upon other topics. She sat there with her extremely pretty hands, ornamented with very brilliant rings, folded in her lap, and with her pretty eyes now resting upon those of Winterbourne, now wandering over the garden, the people who passed by, and the beautiful view. She talked to Winterbourne as if she had known him a long time. He found it very pleasant. It was many years since he had heard a young girl talk so much. It might have been said of this unknown young lady, who had come and sat down beside him upon a bench, that she chattered. She was very quiet; she sat in a charming, tranquil attitude, but her lips and her eyes were constantly moving. She had a soft, slender, agreeable voice, and her tone was decidedly sociable. She gave Winterbourne a history of her movements and intentions, and those of her mother and brother, in Europe, and enumerated, in particular, the various hotels at which they had stopped. "That English lady in the cars," she said — "Miss Featherstone — asked me if we didn't all live in hotels in America. I told her I had never been in so many hotels in my life as since I came to Europe. I have never seen so many — it's nothing but hotels." But Miss Miller did not make this remark with a querulous accent; she appeared to be in the best humor with everything. She declared that the hotels were very good, when once you got used to their ways, and that Europe was perfectly sweet. She was not disappointed — not a bit. Perhaps it was because she had heard so much about it before. She had ever so many intimate friends that had been there ever so many times. And then she had had ever so many dresses and things from Paris. Whenever she put on a Paris dress she felt as if she were in Europe.

"It was a kind of a wishing-cap," said Winterbourne.

"Yes," said Miss Miller, without examining this analogy; "it always made me wish I was here. But I needn't have done that for dresses. I am sure they send all the pretty ones to America; you see the most frightful things here. The only thing I don't like," she proceeded, "is the society. There isn't any society; or, if there is, I don't know where it keeps itself. Do you? I suppose there is some society somewhere, but I haven't seen anything of it. I'm very fond of society, and I have always had a

great deal of it. I don't mean only in Schenectady, but in New York. I used to go to New York every winter. In New York I had lots of society. Last winter I had seventeen dinners given me; and three of them were by gentlemen," added Daisy Miller. "I have more friends in New York than in Schenectady — more gentleman friends; and more young lady friends, too," she resumed in a moment. She paused again for an instant; she was looking at Winterbourne with all her prettiness in her lively eyes, and in her light, slightly monotonous smile. "I have always had," she said, "a great deal of gentlemen's society."

Poor Winterbourne was amused, perplexed, and decidedly charmed. He had never yet heard a young girl express herself in just this fashion — never, at least, save in cases where to say such things seemed a kind of demonstrative evidence of a certain laxity of deportment. And yet was he to accuse Miss Daisy Miller of actual or potential *inconduite,* as they said at Geneva? He felt that he lived at Geneva so long that he had lost a good deal; he had become dishabituated to the American tone. Never, indeed, since he had grown old enough to appreciate things had he encountered a young American girl of so pronounced a type as this. Certainly she was very charming, but how deucedly sociable! Was she simply a pretty girl from New York State? were they all like that, the pretty girls who had a good deal of gentlemen's society? Or was she also a designing, an audacious, an unscrupulous young person? Winterbourne had lost his instinct in this matter, and his reason could not help him. Miss Daisy Miller looked extremely innocent. Some people had told him that, after all, American girls were exceedingly innocent; and others had told him that, after all, they were not. He was inclined to think Miss Daisy Miller was a flirt — a pretty American flirt. He had never, as yet, had any relations with young ladies of this category. He had known, here in Europe, two or three women — persons older than Miss Daisy Miller, and provided, for respectability's sake, with husbands — who were great coquettes — dangerous, terrible women, with whom one's relations were liable to take a serious turn. But this young girl was not a coquette in that sense; she was very unsophisticated; she was only a pretty American flirt. Winterbourne was almost grateful for having found the formula that applied to Miss Daisy Miller. He leaned back in his seat; he remarked to himself that she had the most charming nose he had ever seen; he wondered what were the regular conditions and limitations of one's intercourse with a pretty American flirt. It presently became apparent that he was on the way to learn.

"Have you been to that old castle?" asked the young girl, pointing with her parasol to the far-gleaming walls of the Château de Chillon.

"Yes, formerly, more than once," said Winterbourne. "You too, I suppose, have seen it?"

"No; we haven't been there. I want to go there dreadfully. Of course

I mean to go there. I wouldn't go away from here without having seen that old castle."

"It's a very pretty excursion," said Winterbourne, "and very easy to make. You can drive or go by the little steamer."

"You can go in the cars," said Miss Miller.

"Yes; you can go in the cars," Winterbourne assented.

"Our courier says they take you right up to the castle," the young girl continued. "We were going last week; but my mother gave out. She suffers dreadfully from dyspepsia. She said she couldn't go. Randolph wouldn't go, either; he says he doesn't think much of old castles. But I guess we'll go this week, if we can get Randolph."

"Your brother is not interested in ancient monuments?" Winterbourne inquired, smiling.

"He says he don't care much about old castles. He's only nine. He wants to stay at the hotel. Mother's afraid to leave him alone, and the courier won't stay with him; so we haven't been to many places. But it will be too bad if we don't go up there." And Miss Miller pointed again at the Château de Chillon.

"I should think it might be arranged," said Winterbourne. "Couldn't you get some one to stay for the afternoon with Randolph?"

Miss Miller looked at him a moment, and then very placidly, "I wish *you* would stay with him!" she said.

Winterbourne hesitated a moment. "I should much rather go to Chillon with you."

"With me?" asked the young girl, with the same placidity.

She didn't rise, blushing, as a young girl at Geneva would have done; and yet Winterbourne, conscious that he had been very bold, thought it possible that she was offended. "With your mother," he answered, very respectfully.

But it seemed that both his audacity and his respect were lost upon Miss Daisy Miller. "I guess my mother won't go, after all," she said. "She don't like to ride round in the afternoon. But did you really mean what you said just now, that you would like to go up there?"

"Most earnestly," Winterbourne declared.

"Then we may arrange it. If mother will stay with Randolph, I guess Eugenio will."

"Eugenio?" the young man inquired.

"Eugenio's our courier. He doesn't like to stay with Randolph; he's the most fastidious man I ever saw. But he's a splendid courier. I guess he'll stay at home with Randolph if mother does, and then we can go to the castle."

Winterbourne reflected for an instant as lucidly as possible — "we" could only mean Miss Daisy Miller and himself. This programme seemed almost too agreeable for credence; he felt as if he ought to kiss the young

lady's hand. Possibly he would have done so, and quite spoiled the project; but at this moment another person, presumably Eugenio, appeared. A tall, handsome man, with superb whiskers, wearing a velvet morning-coat and a brilliant watch-chain, approached Miss Miller, looking sharply at her companion. "Oh, Eugenio!" said Miss Miller, with the friendliest accent.

Eugenio had looked at Winterbourne from head to foot; he now bowed gravely to the young lady. "I have the honor to inform mademoiselle that luncheon is upon the table."

Miss Miller slowly rose. "See here, Eugenio!" she said; "I'm going to that old castle, anyway."

"To the Château de Chillon, mademoiselle?" the courier inquired. "Mademoiselle has made arrangements?" he added, in a tone which struck Winterbourne as very impertinent.

Eugenio's tone apparently threw, even to Miss Miller's own apprehension, a slightly ironical light upon the young girl's situation. She turned to Winterbourne, blushing a little — a very little. "You won't back out?" she said.

"I shall not be happy till we go!" he protested.

"And you are staying in this hotel?" she went on. "And you are really an American?"

The courier stood looking at Winterbourne offensively. The young man, at least, thought his manner of looking an offence to Miss Miller; it conveyed an imputation that she "picked up" acquaintances. "I shall have the honor of presenting to you a person who will tell you all about me," he said, smiling, and referring to his aunt.

"Oh, well, we'll go some day," said Miss Miller. And she gave him a smile and turned away. She put up her parasol and walked back to the inn beside Eugenio. Winterbourne stood looking after her; and as she moved away, drawing her muslin furbelows over the gravel, said to himself that she had the *tournure* of a princess.

He had, however, engaged to do more than proved feasible, in promising to present his aunt, Mrs. Costello, to Miss Daisy Miller. As soon as the former lady had got better of her headache he waited upon her in her apartment; and, after the proper inquiries in regard to her health, he asked her if she had observed in the hotel an American family — a mamma, a daughter, and a little boy.

"And a courier?" said Mrs. Costello. "Oh yes, I have observed them. Seen them — heard them — and kept out of their way." Mrs. Costello was a widow with a fortune; a person of much distinction, who frequently intimated that, if she were not so dreadfully liable to sick-headaches, she would probably have left a deeper impress upon her time. She had a long, pale face, a high nose, and a great deal of very striking white hair, which she wore in large puffs and *rouleaux* over the top of her head. She had two

sons married in New York, and another who was now in Europe. This young man was amusing himself at Hombourg; and, though he was on his travels, was rarely perceived to visit any particular city at the moment selected by his mother for her own appearance there. Her nephew, who had come up to Vevay expressly to see her, was therefore more attentive than those who, as she said, were nearer to her. He had imbibed at Geneva the idea that one must always be attentive to one's aunt. Mrs. Costello had not seen him for many years, and she was greatly pleased with him, manifesting her approbation by initiating him into many of the secrets of that social sway which, as she gave him to understand, she exerted in the American capital. She admitted that she was very exclusive; but, if he were acquainted with New York, he would see that one had to be. And her picture of the minutely hierarchical constitution of the society of that city, which she presented to him in many different lights, was, to Winterbourne's imagination, almost oppressively striking.

He immediately perceived, from her tone, that Miss Daisy Miller's place in the social scale was low. " I am afraid you don't approve of them," he said.

" They are very common," Mrs. Costello declared. " They are the sort of Americans that one does one's duty by not — not accepting."

" Ah, you don't accept them? " said the young man.

" I can't, my dear Frederick. I would if I could, but I can't."

" The young girl is very pretty," said Winterbourne, in a moment.

" Of course she's pretty. But she is very common."

" I see what you mean, of course," said Winterbourne, after another pause.

" She has that charming look that they all have," his aunt resumed. " I can't think where they pick it up; and she dresses in perfection — no, you don't know how well she dresses. I can't think where they get their taste."

" But, my dear aunt, she is not, after all, a Comanche savage."

" She is a young lady," said Mrs. Costello, " who has an intimacy with her mamma's courier."

" An intimacy with the courier, " the young man demanded.

" Oh, the mother is just as bad! They treat the courier like a familiar friend — like a gentleman. I shouldn't wonder if he dines with them. Very likely they have never seen a man with such good manners, such fine clothes, so like a gentleman. He probably corresponds to the young lady's idea of a count. He sits with them in the garden in the evening. I think he smokes."

Winterbourne listened with interest to these disclosures; they helped him to make up his mind about Miss Daisy. Evidently she was rather wild.

" Well," he said, " I am not a courier, and yet she was very charming to me."

" You had better have said at first," said Mrs. Costello, with dignity, " that you had made her acquaintance."

" We simply met in the garden, and we talked a bit."

" *Tout bonnement!* And pray what did you say? "

" I said I should take the liberty of introducing her to my admirable aunt."

" I am much obliged to you."

" It was to guarantee my respectability," said Winterbourne.

" And pray who is to guarantee hers? "

" Ah, you are cruel," said the young man. " She's a very nice young girl."

" You don't say that as if you believed it," Mrs. Costello observed.

" She is completely uncultivated," Winterbourne went on. " But she is wonderfully pretty, and, in short, she is very nice. To prove that I believe it, I am going to take her to the Château de Chillon."

" You two are going off there together? I should say it proved just the contrary. How long had you known her, may I ask, when this interesting project was formed? You haven't been twenty-four hours in the house."

" I had known her half an hour! " said Winterbourne, smiling.

" Dear me! " cried Mrs. Costello. " What a dreadful girl! "

Her nephew was silent for some moments. " You really think, then," he began, earnestly, and with a desire for trustworthy information — " you really think that — " But he paused again.

" Think what, sir? " said his aunt.

" That she is the sort of young lady who expects a man, sooner or later, to carry her off? "

" I haven't the least idea what such young ladies expect a man to do. But I really think that you had better not meddle with little American girls that are uncultivated, as you call them. You have lived too long out of the country. You will be sure to make some great mistake. You are too innocent."

" My dear aunt, I am not so innocent," said Winterbourne, smiling and curling his mustache.

" You are too guilty, then! "

Winterbourne continued to curl his mustache, meditatively. " You won't let the poor girl know you, then? " he asked at last.

" Is it literally true that she is going to the Château de Chillon with you? "

" I think that she fully intends it."

" Then, my dear Frederick," said Mrs. Costello, " I must decline the honor of her acquaintance. I am an old woman, but I am not too old, thank Heaven, to be shocked! "

" But don't they all do these things — the young girls in America? " Winterbourne inquired.

Mrs. Costello stared a moment. " I should like to see my granddaughters do them! " she declared, grimly.

This seemed to throw some light upon the matter, for Winterbourne remembered to have heard that his pretty cousins in New York were " tremendous flirts." If, therefore, Miss Daisy Miller exceeded the liberal margin allowed to these young ladies, it was probable that anything might be expected of her. Winterbourne was impatient to see her again, and he was vexed with himself that, by instinct, he should not appreciate her justly.

Though he was impatient to see her, he hardly knew what he should say to her about his aunt's refusal to become acquainted with her; but he discovered, promptly enough, that with Miss Daisy Miller there was no great need of walking on tiptoe. He found her that evening in the garden, wandering about in the warm starlight like an indolent sylph, and swinging to and fro the largest fan he had ever beheld. It was ten o'clock. He had dined with his aunt, had been sitting with her since dinner, and had just taken leave of her till the morrow. Miss Daisy Miller seemed very glad to see him; she declared it was the longest evening she had ever passed.

" Have you been all alone? " he asked.

" I have been walking round with mother. But mother gets tired walking round," she answered.

" Has she gone to bed? "

" No; she doesn't like to go to bed," said the young girl. " She doesn't sleep — not three hours. She says she doesn't know how she lives. She's dreadfully nervous. I guess she sleeps more than she thinks. She's gone somewhere after Randolph; she wants to try to get him to go to bed. He doesn't like to go to bed."

" Let us hope she will persuade him," observed Winterbourne.

" She will talk to him all she can; but he doesn't like her to talk to him," said Miss Daisy, opening her fan. " She's going to try to get Eugenio to talk to him. But he isn't afraid of Eugenio. Eugenio's a splendid courier, but he can't make much impression on Randolph! I don't believe he'll go to bed before eleven." It appeared that Randolph's vigil was in fact triumphantly prolonged, for Winterbourne strolled about with the young girl for some time without meeting her mother. " I have been looking round for that lady you want to introduce me to," his companion resumed. " She's your aunt." Then, on Winterbourne's admitting the fact, and expressing some curiosity as to how she had learned it, she said she had heard all about Mrs. Costello from the chambermaid. She was very quiet, and very *comme il faut;* she wore white puffs; she spoke to no one, and she never dined at the *table d'hôte*. Every two days she had a headache. " I think that's a lovely description, headache and all! " said Miss Daisy, chattering along in her thin, gay voice. " I want to know her ever so much. I know just what *your* aunt would be; I know I should like her. She would be very ex-

clusive. I like a lady to be exclusive; I'm dying to be exclusive myself. Well, we *are* exclusive, mother and I. We don't speak to every one — or they don't speak to us. I suppose it's about the same thing. Anyway, I shall be ever so glad to know your aunt."

Winterbourne was embarrassed. "She would be most happy," he said; "but I am afraid those headaches will interfere."

The young girl looked at him through the dusk. "But I suppose she doesn't have a headache every day," she said, sympathetically.

Winterbourne was silent a moment. "She tells me she does," he answered at last, not knowing what to say.

Miss Daisy Miller stopped, and stood looking at him. Her prettiness was still visible in the darkness; she was opening and closing her enormous fan. "She doesn't want to know me!" she said, suddenly. "Why don't you say so? You needn't be afraid. I'm not afraid!" And she gave a little laugh.

Winterbourne fancied there was a tremor in her voice; he was touched, shocked, mortified by it. "My dear young lady," he protested, "she knows no one. It's her wretched health."

The young girl walked on a few steps, laughing still. "You needn't be afraid," she repeated. "Why should she want to know me?" Then she paused again; she was close to the parapet of the garden, and in front of her was the starlit lake. There was a vague sheen upon its surface, and in the distance were dimly-seen mountain forms. Daisy Miller looked out upon the mysterious prospect, and then she gave another little laugh. "Gracious! she *is* exclusive!" she said. Winterbourne wondered whether she was seriously wounded, and for a moment almost wished that her sense of injury might be such as to make it becoming in him to attempt to reassure and comfort her. He had a pleasant sense that she would be very approachable for consolatory purposes. He felt then, for the instant, quite ready to sacrifice his aunt, conversationally; to admit that she was a proud, rude woman, and to declare that they needn't mind her. But before he had time to commit himself to this perilous mixture of gallantry and impiety, the young lady, resuming her walk, gave an exclamation in quite another tone. "Well, here's mother! I guess she hasn't got Randolph to go to bed." The figure of a lady appeared, at a distance, very indistinct in the darkness, and advancing with a slow and wavering movement. Suddenly it seemed to pause.

"Are you sure it is your mother? Can you distinguish her in this thick dusk?" Winterbourne asked.

"Well!" cried Miss Daisy Miller, with a laugh; "I guess I know my own mother. And when she has got on my shawl, too! She is always wearing my things."

The lady in question, ceasing to advance, hovered vaguely about the spot at which she had checked her steps.

"I am afraid your mother doesn't see you," said Winterbourne. "Or perhaps," he added, thinking, with Miss Miller, the joke permissible — "perhaps she feels guilty about your shawl."

"Oh, it's a fearful old thing!" the young girl replied, serenely. "I told her she could wear it. She won't come here, because she sees you."

"Ah, then," said Winterbourne, "I had better leave you."

"Oh no; come on!" urged Miss Daisy Miller.

"I'm afraid your mother doesn't approve of my walking with you."

Miss Miller gave him a serious glance. "It isn't for me; it's for you — that is, it's for *her*. Well, I don't know who it's for! But mother doesn't like any of my gentlemen friends. She's right down timid. She always makes a fuss if I introduce a gentleman. But I *do* introduce them — almost always. If I didn't introduce my gentlemen friends to mother," the young girl added, in her little soft, flat monotone, "I shouldn't think it was natural."

"To introduce me," said Winterbourne, "you must know my name." And he proceeded to pronounce it to her.

"Oh dear, I can't say all that!" said his companion, with a laugh. But by this time they had come up to Mrs. Miller, who, as they drew near, walked to the parapet of the garden and leaned upon it, looking intently at the lake, and turning her back to them. "Mother!" said the young girl, in a tone of decision. Upon this the elder lady turned round. "Mr. Winterbourne," said Miss Daisy Miller, introducing the young man very frankly and prettily. "Common," she was, as Mrs. Costello had pronounced her; yet it was a wonder to Winterbourne that, with her commonness, she had a singularly delicate grace.

Her mother was a small, spare, light person, with a wandering eye, a very exiguous nose, and a large forehead, decorated with a certain amount of thin, much-frizzled hair. Like her daughter, Mrs. Miller was dressed with extreme elegance; she had enormous diamonds in her ears. So far as Winterbourne could observe, she gave him no greeting — she certainly was not looking at him. Daisy was near her, pulling her shawl straight. "What are you doing, poking round here?" this young lady inquired, but by no means with that harshness of accent which her choice of words may imply.

"I don't know," said her mother, turning towards the lake again.

"I shouldn't think you'd want that shawl!" Daisy exclaimed.

"Well, I do!"-her mother answered, with a little laugh.

"Did you get Randolph to go to bed?" asked the young girl.

"No; I couldn't induce him," said Mrs. Miller, very gently. "He wants to talk to the waiter. He likes to talk to that waiter."

"I was telling Mr. Winterbourne," the young girl went on; and to the young man's ear her tone might have indicated that she had been uttering his name all her life.

"Oh yes!" said Winterbourne; "I have the pleasure of knowing your son."

Randolph's mamma was silent; she turned her attention to the lake. But at last she spoke. "Well, I don't see how he lives!"

"Anyhow, it isn't so bad as it was at Dover," said Daisy Miller.

"And what occurred at Dover?" Winterbourne asked.

"He wouldn't go to bed at all. I guess he sat up all night in the public parlor. He wasn't in bed at twelve o'clock; I know that."

"It was half-past twelve," declared Mrs. Miller, with mild emphasis.

"Does he sleep much during the day?" Winterbourne demanded.

"I guess he doesn't sleep much," Daisy rejoined.

"I wish he would!" said her mother. "It seems as if he couldn't."

"I think he's real tiresome," Daisy pursued.

Then for some moments there was silence. "Well, Daisy Miller," said the elder lady, presently, "I shouldn't think you'd want to talk against your own brother!"

"Well, he *is* tiresome, mother," said Daisy, quite without the asperity of a retort.

"He's only nine," urged Mrs. Miller.

"Well, he wouldn't go to that castle," said the young girl. "I'm going there with Mr. Winterbourne."

To this announcement, very placidly made, Daisy's mamma offered no response. Winterbourne took for granted that she deeply disapproved of the projected excursion; but he said to himself that she was a simple, easily-managed person, and that a few deferential protestations would take the edge from her displeasure. "Yes," he began; "your daughter has kindly allowed me the honor of being her guide."

Mrs. Miller's wandering eyes attached themselves, with a sort of appealing air, to Daisy, who, however, strolled a few steps farther, gently humming to herself. "I presume you will go in the cars," said her mother.

"Yes, or in the boat," said Winterbourne.

"Well, of course, I don't know," Mrs. Miller rejoined. "I have never been to that castle."

"It is a pity you shouldn't go," said Winterbourne, beginning to feel reassured as to her opposition. And yet he was quite prepared to find that, as a matter of course, she meant to accompany her daughter.

"We've been thinking ever so much about going," she pursued; "but it seems as if we couldn't. Of course Daisy, she wants to go round. But there's a lady here — I don't know her name — she says she shouldn't think we'd want to go see castles *here;* she should think we'd want to wait till we got to Italy. It seems as if there would be so many there," continued Mrs. Miller, with an air of increasing confidence. "Of course we only want to see the principal ones. We visited several in England," she presently added.

" Ah, yes! in England there are beautiful castles," said Winterbourne. " But Chillon, here, is very well worth seeing."

" Well, if Daisy feels up to it — " said Mrs. Miller, in a tone impregnated with a sense of the magnitude of the enterprise. " It seems as if there was nothing she wouldn't undertake."

" Oh, I think she'll enjoy it! " Winterbourne declared. And he desired more and more to make it a certainty that he was to have the privilege of a tête-à-tête with the young lady, who was strolling along in front of them, softly vocalizing. " You are not disposed, madam," he inquired, " to undertake it yourself? "

Daisy's mother looked at him an instant askance, and then walked forward in silence. Then — " I guess she had better go alone," she said, simply. Winterbourne observed to himself that this was a very different type of maternity from that of the vigilant matrons who massed themselves in the fore-front of social intercourse in the dark old city at the other end of the lake. But his meditations were interrupted by hearing his name very distinctly pronounced by Mrs. Miller's unprotected daughter.

" Mr. Winterbourne! " murmured Daisy.

" Mademoiselle! " said the young man.

" Don't you want to take me out in a boat? "

" At present! " he asked.

" Of course! " said Daisy.

" Well, Annie Miller! " exclaimed her mother.

" I beg you, madam, to let her go," said Winterbourne, ardently; for he had never yet enjoyed the sensation of guiding through the summer starlight a skiff freighted with a fresh and beautiful young girl.

" I shouldn't think she'd want to," said her mother. " I should think she'd rather go indoors."

" I'm sure Mr. Winterbourne wants to take me," Daisy declared. " He's so awfully devoted! "

" I will row you over to Chillon in the starlight."

" I don't believe it! " said Daisy.

" Well! " ejaculated the elder lady again.

" You haven't spoken to me for half an hour," her daughter went on.

" I have been having some very pleasant conversation with your mother," said Winterbourne.

" Well, I want you to take me out in a boat! " Daisy repeated. They had all stopped, and she had turned round and was looking at Winterbourne. Her face wore a charming smile, her pretty eyes were gleaming, she was swinging her great fan about. No; it's impossible to be prettier than that, thought Winterbourne.

" There are half a dozen boats moored at that landing-place," he said, pointing to certain steps which descended from the garden to the lake.

"If you will do me the honor to accept my arm, we will go and select one of them."

Daisy stood there smiling; she threw back her head and gave a little light laugh. "I like a gentleman to be formal!" she declared.

"I assure you it's a formal offer."

"I was bound I would make you say something," Daisy went on.

"You see, it's not very difficult," said Winterbourne. "But I am afraid you are chaffing me."

"I think not, sir," remarked Mrs. Miller, very gently.

"Do, then, let me give you a row," he said to the young girl.

"It's quite lovely, the way you say that!" cried Daisy.

"It will be still more lovely to do it."

"Yes, it would be lovely!" said Daisy. But she made no movement to accompany him; she only stood there laughing.

"I should think you had better find out what time it is," interposed her mother.

"It is eleven o'clock, madam," said a voice, with a foreign accent, out of the neighboring darkness; and Winterbourne, turning, perceived the florid personage who was in attendance upon the two ladies. He had apparently just approached.

"Oh, Eugenio," said Daisy, "I am going out in a boat!"

Eugenio bowed. "At eleven o'clock, mademoiselle?"

"I am going with Mr. Winterbourne — this very minute."

"Do tell her she can't," said Mrs. Miller to the courier.

"I think you had better not go out in a boat, mademoiselle," Eugenio declared.

Winterbourne wished to Heaven this pretty girl were not so familiar with her courier; but he said nothing.

"I suppose you don't think it's proper!" Daisy exclaimed. "Eugenio doesn't think anything's proper."

"I am at your service," said Winterbourne.

"Does mademoiselle propose to go alone?" asked Eugenio of Mrs. Miller.

"Oh, no; with this gentleman!" answered Daisy's mamma.

The courier looked for a moment at Winterbourne — the latter thought he was smiling — and then, solemnly, with a bow, "As mademoiselle pleases!" he said.

"Oh, I hoped you would make a fuss!" said Daisy. "I don't care to go now."

"I myself shall make a fuss if you don't go," said Winterbourne.

"That's all I want — a little fuss!" And the young girl began to laugh again.

"Mr. Randolph has gone to bed!" the courier announced, frigidly.

"Oh, Daisy; now we can go!" said Mrs. Miller.

Daisy turned away from Winterbourne, looking at him, smiling, and fanning herself. " Good-night," she said; " I hope you are disappointed, or disgusted, or something! "

He looked at her, taking the hand she offered him. " I am puzzled," he answered.

" Well, I hope it won't keep you awake! " she said, very smartly; and, under the escort of the privileged Eugenio, the two ladies passed towards the house.

Winterbourne stood looking after them; he was indeed puzzled. He lingered beside the lake for a quarter of an hour, turning over the mystery of the young girl's sudden familiarities and caprices. But the only very definite conclusion he came to was that he should enjoy deucedly " going off " with her somewhere.

Two days afterwards he went off with her to the Castle of Chillon. He waited for her in the large hall of the hotel, where the couriers, the servants, the foreign tourists, were lounging about and staring. It was not the place he should have chosen, but she had appointed it. She came tripping her pretty figure, dressed in the perfection of a soberly elegant travelling costume. Winterbourne was a man of imagination and, as our ancestors used to say, sensibility; as he looked at her dress and — on the great staircase — her little rapid, confiding step, he felt as if there were something romantic going forward. He could have believed he was going to elope with her. He passed out with her among all the idle people that were assembled there; they were all looking at her very hard; she had begun to chatter as soon as she joined him. Winterbourne's preference had been that they should be conveyed to Chillon in a carriage; but she expressed a lively wish to go in the little steamer; she declared that she had a passion for steamboats. There was always such a lovely breeze upon the water, and you saw such lots of people. The sail was not long, but Winterbourne's companion found time to say a great many things. To the young man himself their little excursion was so much of an escapade — an adventure — that, even allowing for her habitual sense of freedom, he had some expectation of seeing her regard it in the same way. But it must be confessed that, in this particular, he was disappointed. Daisy Miller was extremely animated, she was in charming spirits; but she was apparently not at all excited; she was not fluttered; she avoided neither his eyes nor those of any one else; she blushed neither when she looked at him nor when she felt that people were looking at her. People continued to look at her a great deal, and Winterbourne took much satisfaction in his pretty companion's distinguished air. He had been a little afraid that she would talk loud, laugh overmuch, and even, perhaps, desire to move about the boat a good deal. But he quite forgot his fears; he sat smiling, with his eyes upon her face, while, without moving from her place, she delivered herself of a great number of original reflections. It was the most charming garrulity he had ever

heard. He had assented to the idea that she was " common "; but was she so, after all, or was he simply getting used to her commonness? Her conversation was chiefly of what metaphysicians term the objective cast; but every now and then it took a subjective turn.

" What on *earth* are you so grave about? " she suddenly demanded, fixing her agreeable eyes upon Winterbourne's.

" Am I grave? " he asked. " I had an idea I was grinning from ear to ear."

" You look as if you were taking me to a funeral. If that's a grin, your ears are very near together."

" Should you like me to dance a hornpipe on the deck? "

" Pray do, and I'll carry round your hat. It will pay the expenses of our journey."

" I never was better pleased in my life," murmured Winterbourne.

She looked at him a moment, and then burst into a little laugh. " I like to make you say those things! You're a queer mixture! "

In the castle, after they had landed, the subjective element decidedly prevailed. Daisy tripped about the vaulted chambers, rustled her skirts in the corkscrew staircases, flirted back with a pretty little cry and a shudder from the edge of the *oubliettes,* and turned a singularly well-shaped ear to everything that Winterbourne told her about the place. But he saw that she cared very little for feudal antiquities, and that the dusky traditions of Chillon made but a slight impression upon her. They had the good fortune to have been able to walk about without other companionship than that of the custodian; and Winterbourne arranged with this functionary that they should not be hurried — that they should linger and pause wherever they chose. The custodian interpreted the bargain generously — Winterbourne, on his side, had been generous — and ended by leaving them quite to themselves. Miss Miller's observations were not remarkable for logical consistency; for anything she wanted to say she was sure to find a pretext. She found a great many pretexts in the rugged embrasures of Chillon for asking Winterbourne sudden questions about himself — his family, his previous history, his tastes, his habits, his intentions — and for supplying information upon corresponding points in her own personality. Of her own tastes, habits, and intentions Miss Miller was prepared to give the most definite, and, indeed, the most favorable account.

" Well, I hope you know enough! " she said to her companion, after he had told her the history of the unhappy Bonnivard. " I never saw a man that knew so much! " The history of Bonnivard had evidently, as they say, gone into one ear and out of the other. But Daisy went on to say that she wished Winterbourne would travel with them, and " go round " with them; they might know something, in that case. " Don't you want to come and teach Randolph? " she asked. Winterbourne said that nothing could pos-

sibly please him so much, but that he had unfortunately other occupations. " Other occupations? I don't believe it! " said Miss Daisy. " What do you mean? You are not in business." The young man admitted that he was not in business; but he had engagements which, even within a day or two, would force him to go back to Geneva. " Oh, bother! " she said; " I don't believe it! " and she began to talk about something else. But a few moments later, when he was pointing out to her the pretty design of an antique fireplace, she broke out irrelevantly, " You don't mean to say you are going back to Geneva? "

" It is a melancholy fact that I shall have to return to-morrow."

" Well, Mr. Winterbourne," said Daisy, " I think you're horrid! "

" Oh, don't say such dreadful things! " said Winterbourne — " just at the last! "

" The last! " cried the young girl; " I call it the first. I have half a mind to leave you here and go straight back to the hotel alone." And for the next ten minutes she did nothing but call him horrid. Poor Winterbourne was fairly bewildered; no young lady had as yet done him the honor to be so agitated by the announcement of his movements. His companion, after this, ceased to pay any attention to the curiosities of Chillon or the beauties of the lake; she opened fire upon the mysterious charmer of Geneva, whom she appeared to have instantly taken it for granted that he was hurrying back to see. How did Miss Daisy Miller know that there was a charmer in Geneva? Winterbourne, who denied the existence of such a person, was quite unable to discover; and he was divided between amazement at the rapidity of her induction and amusement at the frankness of her *persiflage*. She seemed to him, in all this, an extraordinary mixture of innocence and crudity. " Does she never allow you more than three days at a time? " asked Daisy, ironically. " Doesn't she give you a vacation in summer? There is no one so hard worked but they can get leave to go off somewhere at this season. I suppose, if you stay another day, she'll come after you in the boat. Do wait over till Friday, and I will go down to the landing to see her arrive! " Winterbourne began to think he had been wrong to feel disappointed in the temper in which the young lady had embarked. If he had missed the personal accent, the personal accent was now making its appearance. It sounded very distinctly, at last, in her telling him she would stop " teasing " him if he would promise her solemnly to come down to Rome in the winter.

" That's not a difficult promise to make," said Winterbourne. " My aunt has taken an apartment in Rome for the winter, and has already asked me to come and see her."

" I don't want you to come for your aunt," said Daisy; " I want you to come for me." And this was the only allusion that the young man was ever to hear her make to his invidious kinswoman. He declared that, at any rate,

he would certainly come. After this Daisy stopped teasing. Winterbourne took a carriage, and they drove back to Vevay in the dusk. The young girl was very quiet.

In the evening Winterbourne mentioned to Mrs. Costello that he had spent the afternoon at Chillon with Miss Daisy Miller.

"The Americans — of the courier?" asked this lady.

"Ah, happily," said Winterbourne, "the courier stayed at home."

"She went with you all alone?"

"All alone."

Mrs. Costello sniffed a little at her smelling-bottle. "And that," she exclaimed, "is the young person whom you wanted me to know!"

Part II

WINTERBOURNE, who had returned to Geneva the day after his excursion to Chillon, went to Rome towards the end of January. His aunt had been established there for several weeks, and he had received a couple of letters from her. "Those people you were so devoted to last summer at Vevay have turned up here, courier and all," she wrote. "They seem to have made several acquaintances, but the courier continues to be the most *intime*. The young lady, however, is also very intimate with some third-rate Italians, with whom she rackets about in a way that makes much talk. Bring me that pretty novel of Cherbuliez's — *Paule Méré* — and don't come later than the 23d."

In the natural course of events, Winterbourne, on arriving in Rome, would presently have ascertained Mrs. Miller's address at the American banker's, and have gone to pay his compliments to Miss Daisy. "After what happened at Vevay, I think I may certainly call upon them," he said to Mrs. Costello.

"If, after what happens — at Vevay and everywhere — you desire to keep up the acquaintance, you are very welcome. Of course a man may know every one. Men are welcome to the privilege!"

"Pray what is it that happens — here, for instance?" Winterbourne demanded.

"The girl goes about alone with her foreigners. As to what happens further, you must apply elsewhere for information. She has picked up half a dozen of the regular Roman fortune-hunters, and she takes them about to people's houses. When she comes to a party she brings with her a gentleman with a good deal of manner and a wonderful mustache."

"And where is the mother?"

"I haven't the least idea. They are very dreadful people."

Winterbourne meditated a moment. "They are very ignorant — very innocent only. Depend upon it they are not bad."

"They are hopelessly vulgar," said Mrs. Costello. "Whether or no being

hopelessly vulgar is being 'bad' is a question for the metaphysicians. They are bad enough to dislike, at any rate; and for this short life that is quite enough."

The news that Daisy Miller was surrounded by half a dozen wonderful mustaches checked Winterbourne's impulse to go straightway to see her. He had, perhaps, not definitely flattered himself that he had made an ineffaceable impression upon her heart, but he was annoyed at hearing of a state of affairs so little in harmony with an image that had lately flitted in and out of his own meditations; the image of a very pretty girl looking out of an old Roman window and asking herself urgently when Mr. Winterbourne would arrive. If, however, he determined to wait a little before reminding Miss Miller of his claims to her consideration, he went very soon to call upon two or three other friends. One of these friends was an American lady who had spent several winters at Geneva, where she had placed her children at school. She was a very accomplished woman, and she lived in the Via Gregoriana. Winterbourne found her in a little crimson drawing-room on a third floor; the room was filled with southern sunshine. He had not been there ten minutes when the servant came in, announcing "Madame Mila!" This announcement was presently followed by the entrance of little Randolph Miller, who stopped in the middle of the room and stood staring at Winterbourne. An instant later his pretty sister crossed the threshold; and then, after a considerable interval, Mrs. Miller slowly advanced.

"I know you!" said Randolph.

"I'm sure you know a great many things," exclaimed Winterbourne, taking him by the hand. "How is your education coming on?"

Daisy was exchanging greetings very prettily with her hostess; but when she heard Winterbourne's voice she quickly turned her head. "Well, I declare!" she said.

"I told you I should come, you know," Winterbourne rejoined, smiling.

"Well, I didn't believe it," said Miss Daisy.

"I am much obliged to you," laughed the young man.

"You might have come to see me!" said Daisy.

"I arrived only yesterday."

"I don't believe that!" the young girl declared.

Winterbourne turned with a protesting smile to her mother; but this lady evaded his glance, and, seating herself, fixed her eyes upon her son. "We've got a bigger place than this," said Randolph. "It's all gold on the walls."

Mrs. Miller turned uneasily in her chair. "I told you if I were to bring you, you would say something!" she murmured.

"I told *you!*" Randolph exclaimed. "I tell *you,* sir!" he added, jocosely, giving Winterbourne a thump on the knee. "It *is* bigger, too!"

Daisy had entered upon a lively conversation with her hostess, and

Winterbourne judged it becoming to address a few words to her mother. "I hope you have been well since we parted at Vevay," he said.

Mrs. Miller now certainly looked at him — at his chin. "Not very well, sir," she answered.

"She's got the dyspepsia," said Randolph. "I've got it, too. Father's got it. I've got it most!"

This announcement, instead of embarrassing Mrs. Miller, seemed to relieve her. "I suffer from the liver," she said. "I think it's this climate; it's less bracing than Schenectady, especially in the winter season. I don't know whether you know we reside at Schenectady. I was saying to Daisy that I certainly hadn't found any one like Dr. Davis, and I didn't believe I should. Oh, at Schenectady he stands first; they think everything of him. He has so much to do, and yet there was nothing he wouldn't do for me. He said he never saw anything like my dyspepsia, but he was bound to cure it. I'm sure there was nothing he wouldn't try. He was just going to try something new when we came off. Mr. Miller wanted Daisy to see Europe for herself. But I wrote to Mr. Miller that it seems as if I couldn't get on without Dr. Davis. At Schenectady he stands at the very top; and there's a great deal of sickness there, too. It affects my sleep."

Winterbourne had a good deal of pathological gossip with Dr. Davis's patient, during which Daisy chattered unremittingly to her own companion. The young man asked Mrs. Miller how she was pleased with Rome. "Well, I must say I am disappointed," she answered. "We had heard so much about it; I suppose we had heard too much. But we couldn't help that. We had been led to expect something different."

"Ah, wait a little, and you will become very fond of it," said Winterbourne.

"I hate it worse and worse every day!" cried Randolph.

"You are like the infant Hannibal," said Winterbourne.

"No, I ain't!" Randolph declared, at a venture.

"You are not much like an infant," said his mother. "But we have seen places," she resumed, "that I should put a long way before Rome." And in reply to Winterbourne's interrogation, "There's Zürich," she concluded, "I think Zürich is lovely; and we hadn't heard half so much about it."

"The best place we've seen is the City of Richmond!" said Randolph.

"He means the ship," his mother explained. "We crossed in that ship. Randolph had a good time on the *City of Richmond*."

"It's the best place I've seen," the child repeated. "Only it was turned the wrong way."

"Well, we've got to turn the right way some time," said Mrs. Miller, with a little laugh. Winterbourne expressed the hope that her daughter at least found some gratification in Rome, and she declared that Daisy was quite carried away. "It's on account of the society — the society's splendid. She goes round everywhere; she has made a great number of acquaint-

ances. Of course she goes round more than I do. I must say they have been very sociable; they have taken her right in. And then she knows a great many gentlemen. Oh, she thinks there's nothing like Rome. Of course, it's a great deal pleasanter for a young lady if she knows plenty of gentlemen."

By this time Daisy had turned her attention again to Winterbourne. "I've been telling Mrs. Walker how mean you were! " the young girl announced.

"And what is the evidence you have offered? " asked Winterbourne, rather annoyed at Miss Miller's want of appreciation of the zeal of an admirer who on his way down to Rome had stopped neither at Bologna nor at Florence, simply because of a certain sentimental impatience. He remembered that a cynical compatriot had once told him that American women — the pretty ones, and this gave a largeness to the axiom — were at once the most exacting in the world and the least endowed with a sense of indebtedness.

"Why, you were awfully mean at Vevay," said Daisy. "You wouldn't do anything. You wouldn't stay there when I asked you."

"My dearest young lady," cried Winterbourne, with eloquence, "have I come all the way to Rome to encounter your reproaches? "

"Just hear him say that! " said Daisy to her hostess, giving a twist to a bow on this lady's dress. "Did you ever hear anything so quaint? "

"So quaint, my dear? " murmured Mrs. Walker, in the tone of a partisan of Winterbourne.

"Well, I don't know," said Daisy, fingering Mrs. Walker's ribbons. "Mrs. Walker, I want to tell you something."

"Mother-r," interposed Randolph, with his rough ends to his words, "I tell you you've got to go. Eugenio 'll raise — something! "

"I'm not afraid of Eugenio," said Daisy, with a toss of her head. "Look here, Mrs. Walker," she went on, "you know I'm coming to your party."

"I am delighted to hear it."

"I've got a lovely dress! "

"I am very sure of that."

"But I want to ask a favor — permission to bring a friend."

"I shall be happy to see any of your friends," said Mrs. Walker, turning with a smile to Mrs. Miller.

"Oh, they are not my friends," answered Daisy's mamma, smiling shyly, in her own fashion. "I never spoke to them."

"It's an intimate friend of mine — Mr. Giovanelli," said Daisy, without a tremor in her clear little voice, or a shadow on her brilliant little face.

Mrs. Walker was silent a moment; she gave a rapid glance at Winterbourne. "I shall be glad to see Mr. Giovanelli," she then said.

"He's an Italian," Daisy pursued, with the prettiest serenity. "He's a great friend of mine; he's the handsomest man in the world — except Mr. Winterbourne! He knows plenty of Italians, but he wants to know some

Americans. He thinks ever so much of Americans. He's tremendously clever. He's perfectly lovely! "

It was settled that this brilliant personage should be brought to Mrs. Walker's party, and then Mrs. Miller prepared to take her leave. " I guess we'll go back to the hotel," she said.

" You may go back to the hotel, mother, but I'm going to take a walk," said Daisy.

" She's going to walk with Mr. Giovanelli," Randolph proclaimed.

" I am going to the Pincio," said Daisy, smiling.

" Alone, my dear — at this hour? " Mrs. Walker asked. The afternoon was drawing to a close — it was the hour for the throng of carriages and of contemplative pedestrians. " I don't think it's safe, my dear," said Mrs. Walker.

" Neither do I," subjoined Mrs. Miller. " You'll get the fever, as sure as you live. Remember what Dr. Davis told you! "

" Give her some medicine before she goes," said Randolph.

The company had risen to its feet; Daisy, still showing her pretty teeth, bent over and kissed her hostess. " Mrs. Walker, you are too perfect," she said. " I'm not going alone; I am going to meet a friend."

" Your friend won't keep you from getting the fever," Mrs. Miller observed.

" Is it Mr. Giovanelli? " asked the hostess.

Winterbourne was watching the young girl; at this question his attention quickened. She stood there smiling and smoothing her bonnet ribbons; she glanced at Winterbourne. Then, while she glanced and smiled, she answered, without a shade of hesitation, " Mr. Giovanelli — the beautiful Giovanelli."

" My dear young friend," said Mrs. Walker, taking her hand, pleadingly, " don't walk off to the Pincio at this unhealthy hour to meet a beautiful Italian."

" Well, he speaks English," said Mrs. Miller.

" Gracious me! " Daisy exclaimed, " I don't want to do anything improper. There's an easy way to settle it." She continued to glance at Winterbourne. " The Pincio is only a hundred yards distant; and if Mr. Winterbourne were as polite as he pretends, he would offer to walk with me! "

Winterbourne's politeness hastened to affirm itself, and the young girl gave him gracious leave to accompany her. They passed down-stairs before her mother, and at the door Winterbourne perceived Mrs. Miller's carriage drawn up, with the ornamental courier, whose acquaintance he had made at Vevay, seated within. " Good-bye, Eugenio! " cried Daisy; " I'm going to take a walk." The distance from the Via Gregoriana to the beautiful garden at the other end of the Pincian Hill is, in fact, rapidly traversed. As the day was splendid, however, and the concourse of vehicles, walkers,

and loungers numerous, the young Americans found their progress much delayed. This fact was highly agreeable to Winterbourne, in spite of his consciousness of his singular situation. The slow-moving, idly-gazing Roman crowd bestowed much attention upon the extremely pretty young foreign lady who was passing through it upon his arm; and he wondered what on earth had been in Daisy's mind when she proposed to expose herself, unattended, to its appreciation. His own mission, to her sense, apparently, was to consign her to the hands of Mr. Giovanelli; but Winterbourne, at once annoyed and gratified, resolved that he would do no such thing.

" Why haven't you been to see me? " asked Daisy. " You can't get out of that."

" I have had the honor of telling you that I have only just stepped out of the train."

" You must have stayed in the train a good while after it stopped! " cried the young girl, with her little laugh. " I suppose you were asleep. You have had time to go to see Mrs. Walker."

" I knew Mrs. Walker — " Winterbourne began to explain.

" I know where you knew her. You knew her at Geneva. She told me so. Well, you knew me at Vevay. That's just as good. So you ought to have come." She asked him no other question than this; she began to prattle about her own affairs. " We've got splendid rooms at the hotel; Eugenio says they're the best rooms in Rome. We are going to stay all winter, if we don't die of the fever; and I guess we'll stay then. It's a great deal nicer than I thought; I thought it would be fearfully quiet; I was sure it would be awfully poky. I was sure we should be going round all the time with one of those dreadful old men that explain about the pictures and things. But we only had about a week of that, and now I'm enjoying myself. I know ever so many people, and they are all so charming. The society's extremely select. There are all kinds — English and Germans and Italians. I think I like the English best. I like their style of conversation. But there are some lovely Americans. I never saw anything so hospitable. There's something or other every day. There's not much dancing; but I must say I never thought dancing was everything. I was always fond of conversation. I guess I shall have plenty at Mrs. Walker's, her rooms are so small." When they had passed the gate of the Pincian Gardens, Miss Miller began to wonder where Mr. Giovanelli might be. " We had better go straight to that place in front," she said, " where you look at the view."

" I certainly shall not help you to find him," Winterbourne declared.

" Then I shall find him without you," said Miss Daisy.

" You certainly won't leave me! " cried Winterbourne.

She burst into her little laugh. " Are you afraid you'll get lost — or run over? But there's Giovanelli, leaning against that tree. He's staring at the women in the carriages; did you ever see anything so cool? "

Winterbourne perceived at some distance a little man standing with folded arms nursing his cane. He had a handsome face, an artfully poised hat, a glass in one eye, and a nosegay in his buttonhole. Winterbourne looked at him a moment, and then said, "Do you mean to speak to that man?"

"Do I mean to speak to him? Why, you don't suppose I mean to communicate by signs?"

"Pray understand, then," said Winterbourne, "that I intend to remain with you."

Daisy stopped and looked at him, without a sign of troubled consciousness in her face; with nothing but the presence of her charming eyes and her happy dimples. "Well, she's a cool one!" thought the young man.

"I don't like the way you say that," said Daisy. "It's too imperious."

"I beg your pardon if I say it wrong. The main point is to give you an idea of my meaning."

The young girl looked at him more gravely, but with eyes that were prettier than ever. "I have never allowed a gentleman to dictate to me, or to interfere with anything I do."

"I think you have made a mistake," said Winterbourne. "You should sometimes listen to a gentleman — the right one."

Daisy began to laugh again. "I do nothing but listen to gentlemen!" she exclaimed. "Tell me if Mr. Giovanelli is the right one."

The gentleman with the nosegay in his bosom had now perceived our two friends, and was approaching the young girl with obsequious rapidity. He bowed to Winterbourne as well as to the latter's companion; he had a brilliant smile, an intelligent eye; Winterbourne thought him not a bad-looking fellow. But he nevertheless said to Daisy, "No, he's not the right one."

Daisy evidently had a natural talent for performing introductions; she mentioned the name of each of her companions to the other. She strolled along with one of them on each side of her; Mr. Giovanelli, who spoke English very cleverly — Winterbourne afterwards learned that he had practised the idiom upon a great many American heiresses — addressed to her a great deal of very polite nonsense; he was extremely urbane, and the young American, who said nothing, reflected upon that profundity of Italian cleverness which enables people to appear more gracious in proportion as they are more acutely disappointed. Giovanelli, of course, had counted upon something more intimate; he had not bargained for a party of three. But he kept his temper in a manner which suggested far-stretching intentions. Winterbourne flattered himself that he had taken his measure. "He is not a gentleman," said the young American; "he is only a clever imitation of one. He is a music-master, or a penny-a-liner, or a third-rate artist. D—n his good looks!" Mr. Giovanelli had certainly a very pretty face; but Winterbourne felt a superior indignation at his own lovely

fellow-country-woman's not knowing the difference between a spurious gentleman and a real one. Giovanelli chattered and jested, and made himself wonderfully agreeable. It was true that, if he was an imitation, the imitation was brilliant. " Nevertheless," Winterbourne said to himself, " a nice girl ought to know! " And then he came back to the question whether this was, in fact, a nice girl. Would a nice girl, even allowing for her being a little American flirt, make a rendezvous with a presumably low-lived foreigner? The rendezvous in this case, indeed, had been in broad daylight, and in the most crowded corner of Rome; but was it not impossible to regard the choice of these circumstances as a proof of extreme cynicism? Singular though it may seem, Winterbourne was vexed that the young girl, in joining her *amoroso,* should not appear more impatient of his own company, and he was vexed because of his inclination. It was impossible to regard her as a perfectly well-conducted young lady; she was wanting in a certain indispensable delicacy. It would therefore simplify matters greatly to be able to treat her as the object of one of those sentiments which are called by romancers " lawless passions." That she should seem to wish to get rid of him would help him to think more lightly of her, and to be able to think more lightly of her would make her much less perplexing. But Daisy, on this occasion, continued to present herself as an inscrutable combination of audacity and innocence.

She had been walking some quarter of an hour, attended by her two cavaliers, and responding in a tone of very childish gayety, as it seemed to Winterbourne, to the pretty speeches of Mr. Giovanelli, when a carriage that had detached itself from the revolving train drew up beside the path. At the same moment Winterbourne perceived that his friend Mrs. Walker — the lady whose house he had lately left — was seated in the vehicle, and was beckoning to him. Leaving Miss Miller's side, he hastened to obey her summons. Mrs. Walker was flushed; she wore an excited air. " It is really too dreadful," she said. " That girl must not do this sort of thing. She must not walk here with you two men. Fifty people have noticed her."

Winterbourne raised his eyebrows. " I think it's a pity to make too much fuss about it."

" It's a pity to let the girl ruin herself! "

" She is very innocent," said Winterbourne.

" She's very crazy! " cried Mrs. Walker. " Did you ever see anything so imbecile as her mother? After you had all left me just now I could not sit still for thinking of it. It seemed too pitiful not even to attempt to save her. I ordered the carriage and put on my bonnet, and came here as quickly as possible. Thank Heaven I have found you! "

" What do you propose to do with us? " asked Winterbourne, smiling.

" To ask her to get in, to drive her about here for half an hour, so that the world may see that she is not running absolutely wild, and then to take her safely home."

" I don't think it's a very happy thought," said Winterbourne; " but you can try."

Mrs. Walker tried. The young man went in pursuit of Miss Miller, who had simply nodded and smiled at his interlocutor in the carriage, and had gone her way with her companion. Daisy, on learning that Mrs. Walker wished to speak to her, retraced her steps with a perfect good grace and with Mr. Giovanelli at her side. She declared that she was delighted to have a chance to present this gentleman to Mrs. Walker. She immediately achieved the introduction, and declared that she had never in her life seen anything so lovely as Mrs. Walker's carriage-rug.

" I am glad you admire it," said this lady, smiling sweetly. " Will you get in and let me put it over you? "

" Oh no, thank you," said Daisy. " I shall admire it much more as I see you driving round with it."

" Do get in and drive with me! " said Mrs. Walker.

" That would be charming, but it's so enchanting just as I am! " and Daisy gave a brilliant glance at the gentlemen on either side of her.

" It may be enchanting, dear child, but it is not the custom here," urged Mrs. Walker, leaning forward in her victoria, with her hands devoutly clasped.

" Well, it ought to be, then! " said Daisy. " If I didn't walk I should expire."

" You should walk with your mother, dear," cried the lady from Geneva, losing patience.

" With my mother, dear! " exclaimed the young girl. Winterbourne saw that she scented interference. " My mother never walked ten steps in her life. And then, you know," she added, with a laugh, " I am more than five years old."

" You are old enough to be more reasonable. You are old enough, dear Miss Miller, to be talked about."

Daisy looked at Mrs. Walker, smiling intensely. " Talked about? What do you mean? "

" Come into my carriage, and I will tell you."

Daisy turned her quickened glance again from one of the gentlemen beside her to the other. Mr. Giovanelli was bowing to and fro, rubbing down his gloves and laughing very agreeably; Winterbourne thought it a most unpleasant scene. " I don't think I want to know what you mean," said Daisy, presently. " I don't think I should like it."

Winterbourne wished that Mrs. Walker would tuck in her carriage-rug and drive away; but this lady did not enjoy being defied, as she afterwards told him. " Should you prefer being thought a very reckless girl? " she demanded.

" Gracious! " exclaimed Daisy. She looked again at Mr. Giovanelli, then she turned to Winterbourne. There was a little pink flush in her cheek; she

was tremendously pretty. " Does Mr. Winterbourne think," she asked slowly, smiling, throwing back her head and glancing at him from head to foot, " that, to save my reputation, I ought to get into the carriage? "

Winterbourne colored; for an instant he hesitated greatly. It seemed so strange to hear her speak that way of her " reputation." But he himself, in fact, must speak in accordance with gallantry. The finest gallantry here was simply to tell her the truth, and the truth for Winterbourne — as the few indications I have been able to give have made him known to the reader — was that Daisy Miller should take Mrs. Walker's advice. He looked at her exquisite prettiness, and then said, very gently, " I think you should get into the carriage."

Daisy gave a violent laugh. " I never heard anything so stiff! If this is improper, Mrs. Walker," she pursued, " then I am all improper, and you must give me up. Good-bye; I hope you'll have a lovely ride! " and, with Mr. Giovanelli, who made a triumphantly obsequious salute, she turned away.

Mrs. Walker sat looking after her, and there were tears in Mrs. Walker's eyes. " Get in here, sir," she said to Winterbourne, indicating the place beside her. The young man answered that he felt bound to accompany Miss Miller; whereupon Mrs. Walker declared that if he refused her this favor she would never speak to him again. She was evidently in earnest. Winterbourne overtook Daisy and her companion, and, offering the young girl his hand, told her that Mrs. Walker had made an imperious claim upon his society. He expected that in answer she would say something rather free, something to commit herself still further to that " recklessness " from which Mrs. Walker had so charitably endeavored to dissuade her. But she only shook his hand, hardly looking at him; while Mr. Giovanelli bade him farewell with a too emphatic flourish of the hat.

Winterbourne was not in the best possible humor as he took his seat in Mrs. Walker's victoria. " That was not clever of you," he said, candidly, while the vehicle mingled again with the throng of carriages.

" In such a case," his companion answered, " I don't wish to be clever; I wish to be *earnest!* "

" Well, your earnestness has only offended her and put her off."

" It has happened very well," said Mrs. Walker. " If she is so perfectly determined to compromise herself, the sooner one knows it the better; one can act accordingly."

" I suspect she meant no harm," Winterbourne rejoined.

" So I thought a month ago. But she has been going too far."

" What has she been doing? "

" Everything that is not done here. Flirting with any man she could pick up; sitting in corners with mysterious Italians; dancing all the evening with the same partners; receiving visits at eleven o'clock at night. Her mother goes away when visitors come."

" But her brother," said Winterbourne, laughing, " sits up till midnight."

" He must be edified by what he sees. I'm told that at their hotel every one is talking about her, and that a smile goes round among all the servants when a gentleman comes and asks for Miss Miller."

" The servants be hanged! " said Winterbourne, angrily. " The poor girl's only fault," he presently added, " is that she is very uncultivated."

" She is naturally indelicate," Mrs. Walker declared. " Take that example this morning. How long had you known her at Vevay? "

" A couple of days."

" Fancy, then, her making it a personal matter that you should have left the place! "

Winterbourne was silent for some moments; then he said, " I suspect, Mrs. Walker, that you and I have lived too long at Geneva! " And he added a request that she should inform him with what particular design she had made him enter her carriage.

" I wished to beg you to cease your relations with Miss Miller — not to flirt with her — to give her no further opportunity to expose herself — to let her alone, in short."

" I'm afraid I can't do that," said Winterbourne. " I like her extremely."

" All the more reason that you shouldn't help her to make a scandal."

" There shall be nothing scandalous in my attentions to her."

" There certainly will be in the way she takes them. But I have said what I had on my conscience," Mrs. Walker pursued. " If you wish to rejoin the young lady I will put you down. Here, by-the-way, you have a chance."

The carriage was traversing that part of the Pincian Garden that overhangs the wall of Rome and overlooks the beautiful Villa Borghese. It is bordered by a large parapet, near which there are several seats. One of the seats at a distance was occupied by a gentleman and a lady, towards whom Mrs. Walker gave a toss of her head. At the same moment these persons rose and walked towards the parapet. Winterbourne had asked the coachman to stop; he now descended from the carriage. His companion looked at him a moment in silence; then, while he raised his hat, she drove majestically away. Winterbourne stood there; he had turned his eyes towards Daisy and her cavalier. They evidently saw no one; they were too deeply occupied with each other. When they reached the low garden-wall they stood a moment looking off at the great flat-topped pine-clusters of the Villa Borghese; then Giovanelli seated himself familiarly upon the broad ledge of the wall. The western sun in the opposite sky sent out a brilliant shaft through a couple of cloud-bars, whereupon Daisy's companion took her parasol out of her hands and opened it. She came a little nearer, and he held the parasol over her; then, still holding it, he let it rest upon her shoulder, so that both of their heads were hidden from Winterbourne. This young man lingered a moment, then he began to walk. But he walked —

not towards the couple with the parasol — towards the residence of his aunt, Mrs. Costello.

He flattered himself on the following day that there was no smiling among the servants when he, at least, asked for Mrs. Miller at her hotel. This lady and her daughter, however, were not at home; and on the next day after, repeating his visit, Winterbourne again had the misfortune not to find them. Mrs. Walker's party took place on the evening of the third day, and, in spite of the frigidity of his last interview with the hostess, Winterbourne was among the guests. Mrs. Walker was one of those American ladies who, while residing abroad, make a point, in their own phrase, of studying European society; and she had on this occasion collected several specimens of her diversely-born fellow-mortals to serve, as it were, as text-books. When Winterbourne arrived, Daisy Miller was not there, but in a few moments he saw her mother come in alone, very shyly and ruefully. Mrs. Miller's hair above her exposed-looking temples was more frizzled than ever. As she approached Mrs. Walker, Winterbourne also drew near.

"You see I've come all alone," said poor Mrs. Miller. "I'm so frightened I don't know what to do. It's the first time I've ever been to a party alone, especially in this country. I wanted to bring Randolph, or Eugenio, or some one, but Daisy just pushed me off by myself. I ain't used to going round alone."

"And does not your daughter intend to favor us with her society?" demanded Mrs. Walker, impressively.

"Well, Daisy's all dressed," said Mrs. Miller, with that accent of the dispassionate, if not of the philosophic, historian with which she always recorded the current incidents of her daughter's career. "She got dressed on purpose before dinner. But she's got a friend of hers there; that gentleman — the Italian — that she wanted to bring. They've got going at the piano; it seems as if they couldn't leave off. Mr. Giovanelli sings splendidly. But I guess they'll come before very long," concluded Mrs. Miller, hopefully.

"I'm sorry she should come in that way," said Mrs. Walker.

"Well, I told her that there was no use in her getting dressed before dinner if she was going to wait three hours," responded Daisy's mamma. "I didn't see the use of her putting on such a dress as that to sit round with Mr. Giovanelli."

"This is most horrible!" said Mrs. Walker, turning away and addressing herself to Winterbourne. "*Elle s'affiche*. It's her revenge for my having ventured to remonstrate with her. When she comes I shall not speak to her."

Daisy came after eleven o'clock; but she was not, on such an occasion, a young lady to wait to be spoken to. She rustled forward in radiant loveliness, smiling and chattering, carrying a large bouquet, and attended by

Mr. Giovanelli. Every one stopped talking, and turned and looked at her. She came straight to Mrs. Walker. "I'm afraid you thought I never was coming, so I sent mother off to tell you. I wanted to make Mr. Giovanelli practise some things before he came; you know he sings beautifully, and I want you to ask him to sing. This is Mr. Giovanelli; you know I introduced him to you; he's got the most lovely voice, and he knows the most charming set of songs. I made him go over them this evening on purpose; we had the greatest time at the hotel." Of all this Daisy delivered herself with the sweetest, brightest audibleness, looking now at her hostess and now round the room, while she gave a series of little pats round her shoulders to the edges of her dress. "Is there any one I know?" she asked.

"I think every one knows you!" said Mrs. Walker, pregnantly, and she gave a very cursory greeting to Mr. Giovanelli. This gentleman bore himself gallantly. He smiled and bowed, and showed his white teeth; he curled his mustaches and rolled his eyes, and performed all the proper functions of a handsome Italian at an evening party. He sang very prettily half a dozen songs, though Mrs. Walker afterwards declared that she had been quite unable to find out who asked him. It was apparently not Daisy who had given him his orders. Daisy sat at a distance from the piano; and though she had publicly, as it were, professed a high admiration for his singing, talked, not inaudibly, while it was going on.

"It's a pity these rooms are so small; we can't dance," she said to Winterbourne, as if she had seen him five minutes before.

"I am not sorry we can't dance," Winterbourne answered; "I don't dance."

"Of course you don't dance; you're too stiff," said Miss Daisy. "I hope you enjoyed your drive with Mrs. Walker!"

"No, I didn't enjoy it; I preferred walking with you."

"We paired off; that was much better," said Daisy. "But did you ever hear anything so cool as Mrs. Walker's wanting me to get into her carriage and drop poor Mr. Giovanelli, and under the pretext that it was proper? People have different ideas! It would have been most unkind; he had been talking about that walk for ten days."

"He should not have talked about it at all," said Winterbourne; "he would never have proposed to a young lady of this country to walk about the streets with him."

"About the streets?" cried Daisy, with her pretty stare. "Where, then, would he have proposed to her to walk? The Pincio is not the streets, either; and I, thank goodness, am not a young lady of this country. The young ladies of this country have a dreadfully poky time of it, so far as I can learn; I don't see why I should change my habits for *them*."

"I am afraid your habits are those of a flirt," said Winterbourne, gravely.

" Of course they are," she cried, giving him her little smiling stare again. " I'm a fearful, frightful flirt! Did you ever hear of a nice girl that was not? But I suppose you will tell me now that I am not a nice girl."

" You're a very nice girl; but I wish you would flirt with me, and me only," said Winterbourne.

" Ah! thank you — thank you very much; you are the last man I should think of flirting with. As I have had the pleasure of informing you, you are too stiff."

" You say that too often," said Winterbourne.

Daisy gave a delighted laugh. " If I could have the sweet hope of making you angry, I should say it again."

" Don't do that; when I am angry I'm stiffer than ever. But if you won't flirt with me, do cease, at least, to flirt with your friend at the piano; they don't understand that sort of thing here."

" I thought they understood nothing else! " exclaimed Daisy.

" Not in young unmarried women."

" It seems to me much more proper in young unmarried women than in old married ones," Daisy declared.

" Well," said Winterbourne, " when you deal with natives you must go by the custom of the place. Flirting is a purely American custom; it doesn't exist here. So when you show yourself in public with Mr. Giovanelli, and without your mother — "

" Gracious! poor mother! " interposed Daisy.

" Though you may be flirting, Mr. Giovanelli is not; he means something else."

" He isn't preaching, at any rate," said Daisy, with vivacity. " And if you want very much to know, we are neither of us flirting; we are too good friends for that; we are very intimate friends."

" Ah! " rejoined Winterbourne, " if you are in love with each other, it is another affair."

She had allowed him up to this point to talk so frankly that he had no expectation of shocking her by this ejaculation; but she immediately got up, blushing visibly, and leaving him to exclaim mentally that little American flirts were the queerest creatures in the world. " Mr. Giovanelli, at least," she said, giving her interlocutor a single glance, " never says such very disagreeable things to me."

Winterbourne was bewildered; he stood staring. Mr. Giovanelli had finished singing. He left the piano and came over to Daisy. " Won't you come into the other room and have some tea? " he asked, bending before her with his ornamental smile.

Daisy turned to Winterbourne, beginning to smile again. He was still more perplexed, for this inconsequent smile made nothing clear, though it seemed to prove, indeed, that she had a sweetness and softness that reverted instinctively to the pardon of offences. " It has never occurred to

Mr. Winterbourne to offer me any tea," she said, with her little tormenting manner.

"I have offered you advice," Winterbourne rejoined.

"I prefer weak tea!" cried Daisy, and she went off with the brilliant Giovanelli. She sat with him in the adjoining room, in the embrasure of the window, for the rest of the evening. There was an interesting performance at the piano, but neither of these young people gave heed to it. When Daisy came to take leave of Mrs. Walker, this lady conscientiously repaired the weakness of which she had been guilty at the moment of the young girl's arrival. She turned her back straight upon Miss Miller, and left her to depart with what grace she might. Winterbourne was standing near the door; he saw it all. Daisy turned very pale, and looked at her mother; but Mrs. Miller was humbly unconscious of any violation of the usual social forms. She appeared, indeed, to have felt an incongruous impulse to draw attention to her own striking observance of them. "Good-night, Mrs. Walker," she said; "we've had a beautiful evening. You see, if I let Daisy come to parties without me, I don't want her to go away without me." Daisy turned away, looking with a pale, grave face at the circle near the door; Winterbourne saw that, for the first moment, she was too much shocked and puzzled even for indignation. He on his side was greatly touched.

"That was very cruel," he said to Mrs. Walker.

"She never enters my drawing-room again!" replied his hostess.

Since Winterbourne was not to meet her in Mrs. Walker's drawing-room, he went as often as possible to Mrs. Miller's hotel. The ladies were rarely at home; but when he found them the devoted Giovanelli was always present. Very often the brilliant little Roman was in the drawing-room with Daisy alone, Mrs. Miller being apparently constantly of the opinion that discretion is the better part of surveillance. Winterbourne noted, at first with surprise, that Daisy on these occasions was never embarrassed or annoyed by his own entrance; but he very presently began to feel that she had no more surprises for him; the unexpected in her behavior was the only thing to expect. She showed no displeasure at her tête-à-tête with Giovanelli being interrupted; she could chatter as freshly and freely with two gentlemen as with one; there was always, in her conversation, the same odd mixture of audacity and puerility. Winterbourne remarked to himself that if she was seriously interested in Giovanelli, it was very singular that she should not take more trouble to preserve the sanctity of their interviews; and he liked her the more for her innocent-looking indifference and her apparently inexhaustible good-humor. He could hardly have said why, but she seemed to him a girl who would never be jealous. At the risk of exciting a somewhat derisive smile on the reader's part, I may affirm that with regard to the women who had hitherto interested him, it very often seemed to Winterbourne among the possibilities that, given

certain contingencies, he should be afraid — literally afraid — of these ladies; he had a pleasant sense that he should never be afraid of Daisy Miller. It must be added that this sentiment was not altogether flattering to Daisy; it was part of his conviction, or rather of his apprehension, that she would prove a very light young person.

But she was evidently very much interested in Giovanelli. She looked at him whenever he spoke; she was perpetually telling him to do this and to do that; she was constantly "chaffing" and abusing him. She appeared completely to have forgotten that Winterbourne had said anything to displease her at Mrs. Walker's little party. One Sunday afternoon, having gone to St. Peter's with his aunt, Winterbourne perceived Daisy strolling about the great church in company with the inevitable Giovanelli. Presently he pointed out the young girl and her cavalier to Mrs. Costello. This lady looked at them a moment through her eye-glass, and then she said,

"That's what makes you so pensive in these days, eh?"

"I had not the least idea I was pensive," said the young man.

"You are very much preoccupied; you are thinking of something."

"And what is it," he asked, "that you accuse me of thinking of?"

"Of that young lady's — Miss Baker's, Miss Chandler's — what's her name? — Miss Miller's intrigue with that little barber's block."

"Do you call it an intrigue," Winterbourne asked — "an affair that goes on with such peculiar publicity?"

"That's their folly," said Mrs. Costello; "it's not their merit."

"No," rejoined Winterbourne, with something of that pensiveness to which his aunt had alluded. "I don't believe that there is anything to be called an intrigue."

"I have heard a dozen people speak of it; they say she is quite carried away by him."

"They are certainly very intimate," said Winterbourne.

Mrs. Costello inspected the young couple again with her optical instrument. "He is very handsome. One easily sees how it is. She thinks him the most elegant man in the world — the finest gentleman. She has never seen anything like him; he is better, even, than the courier. It was the courier, probably, who introduced him; and if he succeeds in marrying the young lady, the courier will come in for a magnificent commission."

"I don't believe she thinks of marrying him," said Winterbourne, "and I don't believe he hopes to marry her."

"You may be very sure she thinks of nothing. She goes on from day to day, from hour to hour, as they did in the Golden Age. I can imagine nothing more vulgar. And at the same time," added Mrs. Costello, "depend upon it that she may tell you any moment that she is 'engaged.'"

"I think that is more than Giovanelli expects," said Winterbourne.

"Who is Giovanelli?"

"The little Italian. I have asked questions about him, and learned something. He is apparently a perfectly respectable little man. I believe he is, in a small way, a *cavaliere avvocato*. But he doesn't move in what are called the first circles. I think it is really not absolutely impossible that the courier introduced him. He is evidently immensely charmed with Miss Miller. If she thinks him the finest gentleman in the world, he, on his side, has never found himself in personal contact with such splendor, such opulence, such expensiveness, as this young lady's. And then she must seem to him wonderfully pretty and interesting. I rather doubt that he dreams of marrying her. That must appear to him too impossible a piece of luck. He has nothing but his handsome face to offer, and there is a substantial Mr. Miller in that mysterious land of dollars. Giovanelli knows that he hasn't a title to offer. If he were only a count or a *marchese!* He must wonder at his luck, at the way they have taken him up."

"He accounts for it by his handsome face, and thinks Miss Miller a young lady *qui se passe ses fantaisies!*" said Mrs. Costello.

"It is very true," Winterbourne pursued, "that Daisy and her mamma have not yet risen to that stage of — what shall I call it? — of culture, at which the idea of catching a count or a *marchese* begins. I believe that they are intellectually incapable of that conception."

"Ah! but the *avvocato* can't believe it," said Mrs. Costello.

Of the observation excited by Daisy's "intrigue," Winterbourne gathered that day at St. Peter's sufficient evidence. A dozen of the American colonists in Rome came to talk with Mrs. Costello, who sat on a little portable stool at the base of one of the great pilasters. The vesper service was going forward in splendid chants and organ-tones in the adjacent choir, and meanwhile, between Mrs. Costello and her friends, there was a great deal said about poor little Miss Miller's going really "too far." Winterbourne was not pleased with what he heard; but when, coming out upon the great steps of the church, he saw Daisy, who had emerged before him, get into an open cab with her accomplice and roll away through the cynical streets of Rome, he could not deny to himself that she was going very far indeed. He felt very sorry for her — not exactly that he believed that she had completely lost her head, but because it was painful to hear so much that was pretty and undefended and natural assigned to a vulgar place among the categories of disorder. He made an attempt after this to give a hint to Mrs. Miller. He met one day in the Corso a friend, a tourist like himself, who had just come out of the Doria Palace, where he had been walking through the beautiful gallery. His friend talked for a moment about the superb portrait of Innocent X., by Velasquez, which hangs in one of the cabinets of the palace, and then said, "And in the same cabinet, by-the-way, I had the pleasure of contemplating a picture of a different kind — that pretty American girl whom you pointed out to me last week." In answer to Winterbourne's inquiries, his friend narrated that the pretty

American girl — prettier than ever — was seated with a companion in the secluded nook in which the great papal portrait was enshrined.

" Who was her companion? " asked Winterbourne.

" A little Italian with a bouquet in his button-hole. The girl is delightfully pretty; but I thought I understood from you the other day that she was a young lady *du meilleur monde.*"

" So she is! " answered Winterbourne; and having assured himself that his informant had seen Daisy and her companion but five minutes before, he jumped into a cab and went to call on Mrs. Miller. She was at home; but she apologized to him for receiving him in Daisy's absence.

" She's gone out somewhere with Mr. Giovanelli," said Mrs. Miller. " She's always going round with Mr. Giovanelli."

" I have noticed that they are very intimate," Winterbourne observed.

" Oh, it seems as if they couldn't live without each other! " said Mrs. Miller. " Well, he's a real gentleman, anyhow. I keep telling Daisy she's engaged! "

" And what does Daisy say? "

" Oh, she says she isn't engaged. But she might as well be! " this impartial parent resumed; " she goes on as if she was. But I've made Mr. Giovanelli promise to tell me, if *she* doesn't. I should want to write to Mr. Miller about it — shouldn't you? "

Winterbourne replied that he certainly should; and the state of mind of Daisy's mamma struck him as so unprecedented in the annals of parental vigilance that he gave up as utterly irrelevant the attempt to place her upon her guard.

After this Daisy was never at home, and Winterbourne ceased to meet her at the houses of their common acquaintances, because, as he perceived, these shrewd people had quite made up their minds that she was going too far. They ceased to invite her; and they intimated that they desired to express to observant Europeans the great truth that, though Miss Daisy Miller was a young American lady, her behavior was not representative — was regarded by her compatriots as abnormal. Winterbourne wondered how she felt about all the cold shoulders that were turned towards her, and sometimes it annoyed him to suspect that she did not feel at all. He said to himself that she was too light and childish, too uncultivated and unreasoning, too provincial, to have reflected upon her ostracism, or even to have perceived it. Then at other moments he believed that she carried about in her elegant and irresponsible little organism a defiant, passionate, perfectly observant consciousness of the impression she produced. He asked himself whether Daisy's defiance came from the consciousness of innocence, or from her being, essentially, a young person of the reckless class. It must be admitted that holding one's self to a belief in Daisy's " innocence " came to seem to Winterbourne more and more a matter of fine-spun gallantry. As I have already had occasion to relate, he was angry at

finding himself reduced to chopping logic about this young lady; he was vexed at his want of instinctive certitude as to how far her eccentricities were generic, national, and how far they were personal. From either view of them he had somehow missed her, and now it was too late. She was "carried away" by Mr. Giovanelli.

A few days after his brief interview with her mother, he encountered her in that beautiful abode of flowering desolation known as the Palace of the Cæsars. The early Roman spring had filled the air with bloom and perfume, and the rugged surface of the Palatine was muffled with tender verdure. Daisy was strolling along the top of one of those great mounds of ruin that are embanked with mossy marble and paved with monumental inscriptions. It seemed to him that Rome had never been so lovely as just then. He stood looking off at the enchanting harmony of line and color that remotely encircles the city, inhaling the softly humid odors, and feeling the freshness of the year and the antiquity of the place reaffirm themselves in mysterious interfusion. It seemed to him, also, that Daisy had never looked so pretty; but this had been an observation of his whenever he met her. Giovanelli was at her side, and Giovanelli, too, wore an aspect of even unwonted brilliancy.

"Well," said Daisy, "I should think you would be lonesome!"

"Lonesome?" asked Winterbourne.

"You are always going round by your self. Can't you get any one to walk with you?"

"I am not so fortunate," said Winterbourne, "as your companion."

Giovanelli, from the first, had treated Winterbourne with distinguished politeness. He listened with a deferential air to his remarks; he laughed punctiliously at his pleasantries; he seemed disposed to testify to his belief that Winterbourne was a superior young man. He carried himself in no degree like a jealous wooer; he had obviously a great deal of tact; he had no objection to your expecting a little humility of him. It even seemed to Winterbourne at times that Giovanelli would find a certain mental relief in being able to have a private understanding with him — to say to him, as an intelligent man, that, bless you, *he* knew how extraordinary was this young lady, and didn't flatter himself with delusive — or, at least, *too* delusive — hopes of matrimony and dollars. On this occasion he strolled away from his companion to pluck a sprig of almond-blossom, which he carefully arranged in his button-hole.

"I know why you say that," said Daisy, watching Giovanelli. "Because you think I go round too much with *him*." And she nodded at her attendant.

"Every one thinks so — if you care to know," said Winterbourne.

"Of course I care to know!" Daisy exclaimed, seriously. "But I don't believe it. They are only pretending to be shocked. They don't really care a straw what I do. Besides, I don't go round so much."

" I think you will find they do care. They will show it disagreeably."

Daisy looked at him a moment. " How disagreeably? "

" Haven't you noticed anything? " Winterbourne asked.

" I have noticed you. But I noticed you were as stiff as an umbrella the first time I saw you."

" You will find I am not so stiff as several others," said Winterbourne, smiling.

" How shall I find it? "

" By going to see the others."

" What will they do to me? "

" They will give you the cold shoulder. Do you know what that means? "

Daisy was looking at him intently; she began to color.

" Do you mean as Mrs. Walker did the other night? "

" Exactly! " said Winterbourne.

She looked away at Giovanelli, who was decorating himself with his almond-blossom. Then, looking back at Winterbourne, " I shouldn't think you would let people be so unkind! " she said.

" How can I help it? " he asked.

" I should think you would say something."

" I did say something; " and he paused a moment. " I say that your mother tells me that she believes you are engaged."

" Well, she does," said Daisy, very simply.

Winterbourne began to laugh. " And does Randolph believe it? " he asked.

" I guess Randolph doesn't believe anything," said Daisy. Randolph's scepticism excited Winterbourne to further hilarity, and he observed that Giovanelli was coming back to them. Daisy, observing it too, addressed herself again to her countryman. " Since you have mentioned it," she said, " I *am* engaged." . . . Winterbourne looked at her; he had stopped laughing. " You don't believe it! " she added.

He was silent a moment; and then, " Yes, I believe it," he said.

" Oh, no, you don't! " she answered. " Well, then — I am not! "

The young girl and her cicerone were on their way to the gate of the enclosure, so that Winterbourne, who had but lately entered, presently took leave of them. A week afterwards he went to dine at a beautiful villa on the Cælian Hill, and, on arriving, dismissed his hired vehicle. The evening was charming, and he promised himself the satisfaction of walking home beneath the Arch of Constantine and past the vaguely-lighted monuments of the Forum. There was a waning moon in the sky, and her radiance was not brilliant, but she was veiled in a thin cloud-curtain which seemed to diffuse and equalize it. When, on his return from the villa (it was eleven o'clock), Winterbourne approached the dusky circle of the Colosseum, it occurred to him, as a lover of the picturesque, that the interior, in the pale moonshine, would be well worth a glance. He turned

aside and walked to one of the empty arches, near which, as he observed, an open carriage — one of the little Roman street-cabs — was stationed. Then he passed in, among the cavernous shadows of the great structure, and emerged upon the clear and silent arena. The place had never seemed to him more impressive. One-half of the gigantic circus was in deep shade, the other was sleeping in the luminous dusk. As he stood there he began to murmur Byron's famous lines, out of "Manfred"; but before he had finished his quotation he remembered that if nocturnal meditations in the Colosseum are recommended by the poets, they are deprecated by the doctors. The historic atmosphere was there, certainly; but the historic atmosphere, scientifically considered, was no better than a villainous miasma. Winterbourne walked to the middle of the arena, to take a more general glance, intending thereafter to make a hasty retreat. The great cross in the centre was covered with shadow; it was only as he drew near it that he made it out distinctly. Then he saw that two persons were stationed upon the low steps which formed its base. One of these was a woman, seated; her companion was standing in front of her.

Presently the sound of the woman's voice came to him distinctly in the warm night air. "Well, he looks at us as one of the old lions or tigers may have looked at the Christian martyrs!" These were the words he heard, in the familiar accent of Miss Daisy Miller.

"Let us hope he is not very hungry," responded the ingenious Giovanelli. "He will have to take me first; you will serve for dessert!"

Winterbourne stopped, with a sort of horror, and, it must be added, with a sort of relief. It was as if a sudden illumination had been flashed upon the ambiguity of Daisy's behavior, and the riddle had become easy to read. She was a young lady whom a gentleman need no longer be at pains to respect. He stood there looking at her — looking at her companion, and not reflecting that though he saw them vaguely, he himself must have been more brightly visible. He felt angry with himself that he had bothered so much about the right way of regarding Miss Daisy Miller. Then, as he was going to advance again, he checked himself; not from the fear that he was doing her injustice, but from the sense of the danger of appearing unbecomingly exhilarated by this sudden revulsion from cautious criticism. He turned away towards the entrance of the place, but, as he did so, he heard Daisy speak again.

"Why, it was Mr. Winterbourne! He saw me, and he cuts me!"

What a clever little reprobate she was, and how smartly she played at injured innocence! But he wouldn't cut her. Winterbourne came forward again, and went towards the great cross. Daisy had got up; Giovanelli lifted his hat. Winterbourne had now begun to think simply of the craziness, from a sanitary point of view, of a delicate young girl lounging away the evening in this nest of malaria. What if she *were* a clever little repro-

bate? that was no reason for her dying of the *perniciosa*. " How long have you been here? " he asked, almost brutally.

Daisy, lovely in the flattering moonlight, looked at him a moment. Then — " All the evening," she answered, gently. . . . " I never saw anything so pretty."

" I am afraid," said Winterbourne, " that you will not think Roman fever very pretty. This is the way people catch it. I wonder," he added, turning to Giovanelli, " that you, a native Roman, should countenance such a terrible indiscretion."

" Ah," said the handsome native, " for myself I am not afraid."

" Neither am I — for you! I am speaking for this young lady."

Giovanelli lifted his well-shaped eyebrows and showed his brilliant teeth. But he took Winterbourne's rebuke with docility. " I told the signorina it was a grave indiscretion; but when was the signorina ever prudent? "

" I never was sick, and I don't mean to be! " the signorina declared. " I don't look like much, but I'm healthy! I was bound to see the Colosseum by moonlight; I shouldn't have wanted to go home without that; and we have had the most beautiful time, haven't we, Mr. Giovanelli? If there has been any danger, Eugenio can give me some pills. He has got some splendid pills."

" I should advise you," said Winterbourne, " to drive home as fast as possible and take one! "

" What you say is very wise," Giovanelli rejoined. " I will go and make sure the carriage is at hand." And he went forward rapidly.

Daisy followed with Winterbourne. He kept looking at her; she seemed not in the least embarrassed. Winterbourne said nothing; Daisy chattered about the beauty of the place. " Well, I *have* seen the Colosseum by moonlight! " she exclaimed. " That's one good thing." Then, noticing Winterbourne's silence, she asked him why he didn't speak. He made no answer; he only began to laugh. They passed under one of the dark archways; Giovanelli was in front with the carriage. Here Daisy stopped a moment, looking at the young American. " *Did* you believe I was engaged the other day? " she asked.

" It doesn't matter what I believed the other day," said Winterbourne, still laughing.

" Well, what do you believe now? "

" I believe that it makes very little difference whether you are engaged or not! "

He felt the young girl's pretty eyes fixed upon him through the thick gloom of the archway; she was apparently going to answer. But Giovanelli hurried her forward. " Quick! quick! " he said; " if we get in by midnight we are quite safe."

Daisy took her seat in the carriage, and the fortunate Italian placed himself beside her. " Don't forget Eugenio's pills! " said Winterbourne, as he lifted his hat.

" I don't care," said Daisy, in a little strange tone, " whether I have Roman fever or not! " Upon this the cab-driver cracked his whip, and they rolled away over the desultory patches of the antique pavement.

Winterbourne, to do him justice, as it were, mentioned to no one that he had encountered Miss Miller, at midnight, in the Colosseum with a gentleman; but, nevertheless, a couple of days later, the fact of her having been there under these circumstances was known to every member of the little American circle, and commented accordingly. Winterbourne reflected that they had of course known it at the hotel, and that, after Daisy's return, there had been an exchange of remarks between the porter and the cab-driver. But the young man was conscious, at the same moment, that it had ceased to be a matter of serious regret to him that the little American flirt should be " talked about " by low-minded menials. These people, a day or two later, had serious information to give: the little American flirt was alarmingly ill. Winterbourne, when the rumor came to him, immediately went to the hotel for more news. He found that two or three charitable friends had preceded him, and that they were being entertained in Mrs. Miller's salon by Randolph.

" It's going round at night," said Randolph — " that's what made her sick. She's always going round at night. I shouldn't think she'd want to, it's so plaguey dark. You can't see anything here at night, except when there's a moon! In America there's always a moon! " Mrs. Miller was invisible; she was now, at least, giving her daughter the advantage of her society. It was evident that Daisy was dangerously ill.

Winterbourne went often to ask for news of her, and once he saw Mrs. Miller, who, though deeply alarmed, was, rather to his surprise, perfectly composed, and, as it appeared, a most efficient and judicious nurse. She talked a good deal about Dr. Davis, but Winterbourne paid her the compliment of saying to himself that she was not, after all, such a monstrous goose. " Daisy spoke of you the other day," she said to him. " Half the time she doesn't know what she's saying, but that time I think she did. She gave me a message. She told me to tell you — she told me to tell you that she never was engaged to that handsome Italian. I am sure I am very glad. Mr. Giovanelli hasn't been near us since she was taken ill. I thought he was so much of a gentleman; but I don't call that very polite! A lady told me that he was afraid I was angry with him for taking Daisy round at night. Well, so I am; but I suppose he knows I'm a lady. I would scorn to scold him. Anyway, she says she's not engaged. I don't know why she wanted you to know; but she said to me three times, ' Mind you tell Mr. Winterbourne.' And then she told me to ask if you remembered the

time you went to that castle in Switzerland. But I said I wouldn't give any such messages as that. Only, if she is not engaged, I'm sure I'm glad to know it."

But, as Winterbourne had said, it mattered very little. A week after this the poor girl died; it had been a terrible case of the fever. Daisy's grave was in the little Protestant cemetery, in an angle of the wall of imperial Rome, beneath the cypresses and the thick spring-flowers. Winterbourne stood there beside it, with a number of other mourners — a number larger than the scandal excited by the young lady's career would have led you to expect. Near him stood Giovanelli, who came nearer still before Winterbourne turned away. Giovanelli was very pale: on this occasion he had no flower in his button-hole; he seemed to wish to say something. At last he said, " She was the most beautiful young lady I ever saw, and the most amiable; " and then he added in a moment, " and she was the most innocent."

Winterbourne looked at him, and presently repeated his words, " And the most innocent? "

" The most innocent! "

Winterbourne felt sore and angry. " Why the devil," he asked, " did you take her to that fatal place? "

Mr. Giovanelli's urbanity was apparently imperturbable. He looked on the ground a moment, and then he said, " For myself I had no fear; and she wanted to go."

" That was no reason! " Winterbourne declared.

The subtle Roman again dropped his eyes. " If she had lived, I should have got nothing. She would never have married me, I am sure."

" She would never have married you? "

" For a moment I hoped so. But no. I am sure."

Winterbourne listened to him: he stood staring at the raw protuberance among the April daisies. When he turned away again, Mr. Giovanelli with his light, slow step, had retired.

Winterbourne almost immediately left Rome; but the following summer he again met his aunt, Mrs. Costello, at Vevay. Mrs. Costello was fond of Vevay. In the interval Winterbourne had often thought of Daisy Miller and her mystifying manners. One day he spoke of her to his aunt — said it was on his conscience that he had done her injustice.

" I am sure I don't know," said Mrs. Costello. " How did your injustice affect her? "

" She sent me a message before her death which I didn't understand at the time; but I have understood it since. She would have appreciated one's esteem."

" Is that a modest way," asked Mrs. Costello, " of saying that she would have reciprocated one's affection? "

Winterbourne offered no answer to this question; but he presently said,

" You were right in that remark that you made last summer. I was booked to make a mistake. I have lived too long in foreign parts."

Nevertheless, he went back to live at Geneva, whence there continue to come the most contradictory accounts of his motives of sojourn: a report that he is " studying " hard — an intimation that he is much interested in a very clever foreign lady.

LAFCADIO HEARN

(1850–1904)

Lafcadio Hearn was born at Santa Maura, one of the Ionian Islands, of Greek and English parents. In spite of this, and of his early schooling in England, he is usually considered an American writer. He came to the United States as a young man and engaged for some years in journalism. His first short novel, *Chita,* appeared in 1889. *Youma* was published the following year. Shortly after, he went to Japan, became a naturalised Japanese subject, and married a Japanese woman. He taught English literature for some years at the University of Tokio. Hearn's best-known works are his essays on Japanese subjects. Yet his early short novels, mentioned above, are among his most beautiful writings.

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YOUMA

THE *da,* during old colonial days, often held high rank in rich Martinique households. The *da* was usually a Creole negress, — more often, at all events, of the darker than of the lighter hue, — more commonly a *capresse* than a *mestive;* but in her particular case the prejudice of color did not exist. The *da* was a slave; but no freedwoman, however beautiful or cultivated, could enjoy social privileges equal to those of certain *das.* The *da* was respected and loved as a mother: she was at once a foster-mother and nurse. For the Creole child had two mothers: the aristocratic white mother who gave him birth; the dark bond-mother who gave him all care, — who nursed him, bathed him, taught him to speak the soft and musical speech of slaves, took him out in her arms to show him the beautiful tropic world, told him wonderful folk-stories of evenings, lulled him to sleep, attended to his every possible want by day or by night. It was not to be wondered at that during infancy the *da* should have been loved more than the white mother: when there was any marked preference it was nearly always in the *da's* favor. The child was much more with her than with his real mother: she alone satisfied all his little needs; he found her more indulgent, more patient, perhaps even more caressing, than the other. The *da* was herself at heart a child, speaking a child-language, finding pleasure in childish things, — artless, playful, affectionate; she comprehended the thoughts, the impulses, the pains, the faults of the little one as

the white mother could not always have done: she knew intuitively how to soothe him upon all occasions, how to amuse him, how to excite and caress his imagination; — there was absolute harmony between their natures, — a happy community of likes and dislikes, — a perfect sympathy in the animal joy of being. Later on, when the child had become old enough to receive his first lessons from a tutor or governess, to learn to speak French, the affection for the *da* and the affection for the mother began to differentiate in accordance with mental expansion; but, though the mother might be more loved, the *da* was not less cherished than before. The love of the nurse lasted through life; and the relation of the *da* to the family seldom ceased, — except in those cruel instances where she was only " hired " from another slave-holder.

In many cases the family *da* had been born upon the estate: — under the same roof she might serve as nurse for two generations. More often it would happen, that as the family multiplied and divided, — as the sons and daughters, growing up, became themselves fathers and mothers, — she would care for all their children in turn. She ended her days with her masters: although she was legally property, it would have been deemed almost an infamy to sell her. When freed by gratitude — *pour services rendus,* — she did not care to make a home of her own: freedom had small value for her except in the event of her outliving those to whom she was attached. She had children of her own, for whom she would have desired freedom rather than for herself, and for whom she might rightfully ask it, since she had sacrificed so much of her own maternal pleasures for the sake of others' children. She was unselfish and devoted to a degree which compelled gratitude even from natures of iron; — she represented the highest development of natural goodness possible in a race mentally undeveloped, kept half savage by subservience, but physically refined in a remarkable manner by climate, environment, and all those mysterious influences which form the characteristics of Creole peoples.

The *da* is already of the past. Her special type was a product of slavery, largely created by selection: the one creation of slavery perhaps not unworthy of regret, — one strange flowering amid all the rank dark growths of that bitter soil. The atmosphere of freedom was not essentially fatal to the permanence of the type; but with freedom came many unlooked-for changes: a great industrial depression due to foreign rivalry and new discoveries, — a commercial crisis, in brief, — accompanied the establishment of universal suffrage, the subordination of the white element to the black by a political upheaval, and the total disintegration of the old social structure. The transformation was too violent for good results; the abuse of political powers too speedily and indiscriminately conferred, intensified the old hates and evolved new ones: the races drew forever apart when they needed each other most. Then the increasing difficulty of existence quickly developed egotism: generosity and prosperity departed together;

Creole life shrank into narrower channels; and the character of all classes visibly hardened under pressure of necessities previously unknown.

. . . There are really no more *das:* there are now only *gardiennes* or *bonnes* — nurses who can seldom keep a place more than three months. The loyalty and simplicity of the *da* have become traditions: vain to seek for any parallels among the new generation of salaried domestics! But of those who used to be *das,* several survive, and still bear the name, which, once conferred, is retained through life as an honorific title. Some are yet to be seen in Saint Pierre. . . . There is a very fine house on the seaward side of the Grande Rue, for example, on whose marble door-step one may be observed almost every fine morning, — a very aged negress, who loves the sun. That is Da Siyotte. Gentlemen of wealth and high position, merchants and judges, salute her as they pass by. You might see the men of the family, — the gray old father and his handsome sons, — pause to chat a moment with her before going to their offices. You might see young ladies bend down and kiss her before taking their places in the carriage for a drive. You would find, — could you linger long enough, — that all visitors greet her with a smile, and a kindly query: — "*Coument ou yé, Da Siyotte?*" . . . Woe to the stranger who should speak rudely to her, under the impression that she is only a servant! . . . "*Si elle n'est qu'une domestique,*" said the master of the house, rebuking such a one, — "*alors vous n'êtes qu'un valet!*" For to insult the *da,* is to insult the household. When she dies, she will have such a funeral as money alone could not obtain, — a funeral of the *première classe,* attended by the richest and proudest of the city. There are planters who will ride that day twenty miles over the mornes to act as pall-bearers. There are ladies who rarely tread pavement, who seldom go out except in their own vehicles, — but who will follow the coffin of that old negress on foot, in the hot sun, all the way to the *Cimetière du Mouillage.* And they will inter their *da* in the family vault, while the crowns of the great palms quiver to the *bourdon.*

I

There are old persons still living in Saint Pierre who remember Youma, a tall *capresse,* the property of Madame Léonie Peyronnette. The servant was better known than the mistress; — for Madame Peyronnette went out little after the loss of her husband, a wealthy merchant, who had left her in more than comfortable circumstances.

Youma was a pet slave, and also the godchild of Madame Peyronnette: it was not uncommon during the old régime for Creole ladies to become godmothers of little slaves. Douceline, the mother of Youma, had been purchased as a *da* for Madame Peyronnette's only child, Aimée — and had died when Aimée was nearly five years old. The two children were nearly the same age, and seemed much attached to each other: after

Douceline's death, Madame Peyronnette resolved to bring up the little capresse as a playmate for her daughter.

The dispositions of the two children were noticeably different; and with their growth, the difference became more marked. Aimée was demonstrative and affectionate, sensitive and passionate, — quick to veer from joy to grief, from tears to smiles. Youma, on the contrary, was almost taciturn, seldom betrayed emotion: she would play silently when Aimée screamed, and scarcely smile when Aimée laughed so violently as to frighten her mother. In spite of these differences of organization, or perhaps because of them, the two got along together very well: they had never a serious quarrel, and were first separated only when Aimée, at the age of nine, was sent to a convent to receive an education more finished than it was thought that private teachers were capable of giving. Aimée's grief at parting from her playmate was not assuaged by the assurance that she would find at school nicer companions than a young capresse; — Youma, who had certainly more to lose by the change, remained outwardly calm, — "*était d'une conduite irréprochable,*" said Madame Peyronnette, too fine an observer to attribute the " irreproachable conduct " to insensibility.

The friends continued to see each other, however; for Madame Peyronnette drove to the convent in her carriage regularly every Sunday, always taking Youma with her; and Aimée seemed scarcely less delighted to see her former playmate than to see her mother. During the first summer vacation and the Christmas holidays, the companionship of childhood was naïvely resumed; and the mutual affection survived the subsequent natural change of relation: though nominally a *bonne,* who addressed Aimée as a mistress, Youma was treated almost as a foster-sister. And when Mademoiselle had finished her studies, the young slave-maid remained her confidante, and to some extent her companion. Youma had never learned to read and write; Madame Peyronnette believed that to educate her would only make her dissatisfied with the scope of a destiny out of which no effort could elevate her; but the girl had a natural intelligence which compensated her lack of mental training in many respects: she knew what to do and how to speak upon all occasions. She had grown up into a superb woman, — certainly the finest capresse of the arrondissement. Her tint was a clear deep red; — there was in her features a soft vague beauty, — a something that suggested the indefinable face of the Sphinx, especially in profile; — her hair, though curly as a black fleece, was long and not uncomely; she was graceful furthermore, and very tall. At fifteen she had seemed a woman; at eighteen she was taller by head and shoulders than her young mistress; and Mademoiselle Aimée, though not below the average stature, had to lift up her eyes, when they walked out together, to look into Youma's face. The young *bonne* was universally admired: she was one of those figures that a Martiniquais would point out with pride to a stranger as a type of the beauty of the mixed race. Even in slave days,

the Creole did not refuse himself the pleasure of admiring in human skin those tones none fear to praise in bronze or gold; he frankly confessed them exquisite; — æsthetically, his " color prejudice " had no existence. There were few young whites, nevertheless, who would have presumed to tell their admiration to Youma: there was something in the eyes and the serious manner of the young slave that protected her quite as much as the moral power of the family in which she had been brought up.

Madame Peyronnette was proud of her servant, and took pleasure in seeing her attired as handsomely as possible in the brilliant and graceful costume then worn by the women of color. In regard to dress, Youma had no reason to envy any of the freed class: she had all that a capresse could wish to wear, according to local ideas of color contrast, — *jupes* of silk and of satin, — *robes-dézindes* with head-dresses and foulards to match, — azure with orange, red with violet, yellow with bright blue, green with rose. On particular occasions, such as the first communion of Aimée, the *fête* of madame, a ball, a wedding to which the family were invited, Youma's costume was magnificent. With her trailing *jupe* of orange satin attached just below the bosom, and exposing above it the laced and embroidered chemise, with half-sleeves leaving the braceleted arms bare, and fastened at the elbow with gold clasps (*boutons-à-clous*); — her neck-kerchief (*mouchouè-en-lai*) of canary yellow striped with green and blue; — her triple necklace of graven gold beads (*collier-chou*); — her flashing ear-pendants (*zanneaux-à-clou*), each a packet of thick gold cylinders interjoined; — her yellow-banded Madras turban, dazzling with jewelry, — " trembling-pins," chainlets, quivering acorns of gold (*broches-à-gland*), — she might have posed to a painter for the Queen of Sheba. There were various pretty presents from Aimée among Youma's ornaments; but the greater part of the jewelry had been purchased for her by Madame Peyronnette, in a series of New-Year gifts. Youma was denied no pleasure which it was thought she might reasonably wish for, — except liberty.

Perhaps Youma had never given herself any trouble on the subject; but Madame Peyronnette had thought a good deal about it, and had made up her mind. Twice she refused the girl's liberty to Mademoiselle Aimée, in spite of earnest prayers and tears. The refusal was prompted by motives which Aimée was then too young fully to comprehend. Madame Peyronnette's real intention was that Youma should be enfranchised so soon as it could render her any happier to be free. For the time being, her slavery was a moral protection: it kept her legally under the control of those who loved her most: it guarded her against dangers she yet knew nothing of; — above all, it prevented the possibility of her forming a union not approved by her mistress. The godmother had plans of her own for the girl's future: she intended that Youma should one day marry a thrifty and industrious freedman, — somebody able to make a good home for her, a shipwright, cabinet-maker, builder, master mechanic of some kind; — and in such an

event she was to have her liberty, — perhaps a small dowry besides. In the meanwhile she was certainly as happy as it was possible to make her.

. . . At nineteen Aimée made a love-match, — marrying M. Louis Desrivières, a distant cousin, some ten years older. M. Desrivières had inherited a prosperous estate on the east coast; but, like many wealthy planters, passed the greater part of the year by preference in the city; and it was to his mother's residence in the Quartier du Fort that he led his young bride. Youma, in accordance with Aimée's wish, accompanied her to her new home. It was not so far from Madame Peyronnette's dwelling in the Grande Rue to the home of the Desrivières in the Rue de la Consolation that either the daughter or the goddaughter could find the separation painful.

. . . Thirteen months later, Youma, attired like some Oriental princess, carried to the baptismal font a baby girl, whose advent into the little colonial world was recorded in the Archives de la Marine, — "*Lucile-Aimée-Francillette-Marie, fille du sieur Raoul-Ernest-Louis Desrivières, et de dame Adélaïde-Hortense-Aimée Peyronnette.*" Then Youma became the *da* of little Mayotte. It is by the last of the names conferred at christening that the child is generally called and known, — or, rather, by some Creole diminutive of that name. . . . The diminutive of Marie is Mayotte.

In both families Mayotte was thought to resemble her father more than her mother: she had his gray eyes, and brown hair, — that bright hair which with children of the older colonial families darkens to apparent black as they grow up. She gave promise of becoming pretty.

Another year passed, during which no happier household could have been found: then, with cruel suddenness, Aimée was taken away by death. She had gone out with her husband in an open carriage, for a drive on the beautiful mountain-route called *La Trace;* leaving Youma with the child at home. On their return journey, one of those chilly and torrential rains which at certain seasons accompany an unexpected storm, overtook them when far from any place of shelter, and in the middle of an afternoon that had been unusually warm. Both were drenched in a moment; and a strong north-east wind, springing up, blew full upon them the whole way home. The young wife, naturally delicate, was attacked with pleurisy; and in spite of all possible aid, expired before the next sunrise.

And Youma robed her for the last time, tenderly and deftly as she had robed her for her first ball in pale blue, and for her wedding day all in vapory white. Only now, Aimée was robed all in black, as dead Creole mothers are.

M. Desrivières had loved his young wife passionately: he had married with a fresh heart, and a character little hardened by contact with the rougher side of existence. The trial was a terrible one; — for a time it was

feared that he could not survive it. When he began at last to recover from the serious illness caused by his grief, he found it impossible to linger in his home, with its memories: he went as soon as possible to his plantation, and tried to busy himself there, making from time to time brief visits to the city to see his child, whom Madame Peyronnette insisted on caring for. But Mayotte proved delicate, like her mother; and during a season of epidemic, some six months later, Madame Peyronnette decided that it would be better to send her to the country, to her father, in charge of Youma. Anse-Marine was known to be one of the healthiest places in the colony; and the child began to gain strength there, as the sensitive plant — *zhèbe-mamisé* — toughens in the warm sea-wind.

II

It is a long ride from Saint Pierre over the mountains to the plantation of Anse-Marine, — formerly owned by the Desrivières; but the fatigue of six hours in the saddle under a tropic sun is not likely to be felt by one susceptible to those marvellous beauties in which the route abounds. Sometimes it rises almost to those white clouds that nearly always veil the heads of the great peaks; — sometimes it slopes down through the green twilight of primitive forests; — sometimes it overlooks vast depths of valley walled in by mountains of strange shapes and tints; — sometimes it winds over undulations of cane-covered land, beyond whose yellow limit appears the vapory curve of an almost purple sea.

Perhaps, for hours together, you see no motion but that of leaves and their shadows, — hear only the sound of your horse's hoofs, or the papery rustling of cane waved by the wind, — or, from the verge of some green chasm veiled by tree-ferns, the long low flute-call of an unknown bird. But, sooner or later, at a turn of the way, you come upon something of more human interest, — some living incident full of exotic charm: such as a caravan of young colored girls, barefooted and bare-armed, transporting on their heads to market the produce of a *cacaoyère;* or a negro running by under an amazing load of bread-fruits or *régimes-bananes.*

Perhaps you may meet a troop of black men drawing to the coast upon a *diabe* or "devil," — which is a low strong vehicle with screaming axles, — a *gommier* already hollowed out and shapen for a canoe: those behind pushing, and those before pulling all together, while a drummer beats his *ka* on the bottom of the unfinished boat, to the measure of their song: *"Bom! ti canot! — allé châché! — méné vini! — Bom! ti canot!"* . . .

Or perhaps you encounter a band of woodmen, sawing into planks by the roadside some newly felled tree, with a core yellow as saffron, or vermilion-red, — a tree of which you do not know the name. It has been lifted upon a strong timber framework; and three men wield the long saw, — one above, two below, — all with their shirts off. The torso of the man above

is orange-yellow: one of the sawyers below is cinnamon-color, the other a shining black as of lacquer: all are sculpturally muscled; and they sing as they saw: —

Pou nou allé." . . .
Aïe!
Aïe! dos calé!
Aïe, scié bois,
Aïe!
Pou nou allé. . . ."

. . . Such incidents become rarer as you begin the long descent, through cane-fields and *cacaoyères,* from the wooded heights to the further sea, — leaving shadows and coolness behind to ride over lands all uncovered to the sun; but the immense peace charms like a caress, and the magnificent expansions of the view console for the seeming absence of human life. Behind you, and to north and south, the mornes heighten their semicircle above the undulating leagues of yellow cane, — and beyond them sharper summits loom, all violet, — and over the violet tower successive surgings of paler peaks and cusps and jagged ridges, — phantom blues and pearls. Before you, over the yellow miles, purples the far crescent of sea under its horizon curve, — a band of upward-fading opal light; — and a strong warm wind is blowing in your face. You ride on, sometimes up a low wide hill, sometimes over a plateau, — more often down a broad incline, — the sea alternately vanishing and reappearing, — and leave the main road at last to follow a way previously hidden by rising ground, — a plantation road, bordered with cocoa-palms. It brings you by long windings, between canes that shut off the view on either hand, to one of the prettiest valleys in the world. At least you will deem it so, as you draw rein at the verge of a morne, to admire the almost perfect half-round of softly wrinkled hills opening to the sea, — whose foam-line stretches like a snowy quivering thread between two green peaks, over a band of ebon beach; — and the golden expanse of canes below; — and the river dividing it, broadening between fringes of bamboo, to reach the breakers; — and the tenderness of shadows blue-tinted by vapors, the flickering of sunlight in the silver of cascades, the touching of sky and sea beyond all. Last, you will notice the plantation buildings on a knoll below, in a grove of cocoa-palms: — the long yellow-painted mill, with its rumbling water-wheel and tall chimney; — the *rhommerie;* — the sugar-house; — the village of thatched cabins, with banana leaves fluttering in tiny gardens; — the single-story residence of the planter, built to resist winds and earthquakes; — the cottage of the overseer; — the hurricane-house, or *case-à-vent;* — and the white silhouette of a high wooden cross at the further entrance to the little settlement.

All this was once the property of the Desrivières, — the whole valley

from shore to hill-top: the *atelier* numbered nearly one hundred and fifty hands. Since then, the plantation has been sold and resold many times, — exploited with varying fortune by foreigners as well as Creoles; — and nevertheless there have been so few changes that the place itself probably looks just as it looked fifty years, or even a hundred years ago.

But at the time when the Desrivières owned Anse-Marine, plantation life offered an aspect very different to that which it presents to-day. On this estate in particular, it was patriarchal and picturesque to a degree scarcely conceivable by one who knows the colony only since the period inaugurated by emancipation. The slaves were treated very much like children: it was a traditional family policy to sell only those who could not be controlled without physical punishment. Each adult was allowed a small garden, which he might cultivate as he pleased, — half-days being allotted twice in every week for that purpose; and the larger part of the money received for the produce, the slave was permitted to retain. Legally a slave could own nothing, yet several of the Desrivières hands were known to have economized creditable sums, with the encouragement of their owner. Work was performed with song, to the music of the drum; — there were holidays, and evenings of privileged dancing. The great occasion of the year was the *fête* of Madame Desrivières, the mother of the young planter, the old mistress (*tétesse*), — a day of *bamboulas* and *caleindas,* — when all the slaves were received by the lady on the veranda: each kissed her hand and each found in it a silver coin. But it was a delight for the visitor, especially if a European, to watch even the common incidents of this colonial country life, so full of exotic oddities and unconscious poetry.

The routine of each day opened with an amusing scene, — the morning inspection of the feet of the children. These, up to the age of nine or ten, had little to do but to play and eat. They were under the charge of the *infirmière,* Tanga, an old African woman, who, aided by her daughters, prepared their simple food, and looked after them while their mothers were in the fields. Soon after sunrise, Tanga, accompanied by the overseer, would assemble them, and make them sit down in line on the long plank benches under the awning of the infirmary building: then at the command, "*Lévé piézautt!*" they would all hold up their little feet together, and the inspection would begin. Whenever Tanga's sharp eye detected the small round swelling which betrays the presence of a *chique,* the child was sent to the infirmary for immediate treatment, and the mother's name taken down by the overseer for reprimand, — every mother being held responsible for a *chique* allowed to remain in her child's foot overnight. There was so much tickling and laughing and screaming at these inspections, that Tanga always had to frighten the children several times before the examination could be finished.

Another morning scene of interest was the departure of a singing caravan of women and girls, carrying to market on their heads various products of

the plantation: cocoa, coffee, cassia; and fruits, — cocoa-nuts, and *mangues,* oranges and bananas, corossols (custard-apples) and "cinnamon-apples" (*pommes cannelles*).

Then a merry event, which occurred almost weekly, was the sortie of the gommier, — a huge canoe nearly sixty feet long, made from a single extraordinary tree. It had no rudder, but a bow at either end, so as to move equally well in either direction; and benches for a dozen paddlers, with a raised seat in the centre for a drummer. It had two *commandeurs,* one at each bow; — it could carry a dozen barrels of rum and six or seven casks of sugar; — and it was used chiefly for transporting these products to the small vessels from Saint Pierre, which dared not venture near the dangerous surf. The gommier itself could only be launched from a sloping cradle built expressly for it over deep water in the hollow of a projecting cliff. When the freight had been stowed and the rowers were in their seats, the drummer beat a signal; blocks were removed, cables loosed, and the long craft shot into the sea, — all its paddles smiting the water simultaneously, in time to the rhythm of the *tamtam,* or the *tambou-belai.*

Every Sunday afternoon the Père Kerambrun came on horseback from the neighboring village to catechise the negro children. It was usually in the sugar house that he held his little class, — the broad doors being thrown open front and rear to admit the sea-breeze, and the sun would throw in spidery shadows of palm-heads on the floor. The old priest knew how to teach the little ones in their own tongue, — repeating over and over again each question and answer of the Creole catechism, till the children learned them by heart, and could chant them like a refrain.

— "*Coument ou ka crié fi Bon-Dié?*" the father would ask. (How do you call the Son of the Good-God?)

Then all the child voices, repeating the question and its answer, would shrill in unison: — "*Coument ou ka crié fi Bon-Dié? — Nou ka crié li Zézou-Chri.*"

— "*Et ça y fai pou nou-zautt, fi Bon-Dié-à?*" (And what did He do for us, that Son of the good God?)

— "*Et ça y fai pou nou-zautt, fi Bon-Dié-à? — Li payé pou nou p'allé dans lenfé; li baill toutt sang-li pou ça.*" (He paid for us not to go to hell; He gave all His blood for that.)

— "*Et quilé prié qui pli meillè-adans toutt prié nou ka fai?*" (And what is the best prayer among all the prayers we say?)

— "*Et quilé prié qui pli meillè adans toutt prié nou ka fai? — C'est Note Pè,*

— "*pace Zézou-Chri*
montré nou li!"

— all would sing together. (It is the *Notre Père,* — the Lord's prayer, — because Jesus Christ showed us how to say it.)

And at the end of each day's task, — when the lambi-shell was blown for the last time to summon all from the fields and the mill buildings, there was the patriarchal spectacle of evening prayer, — an old colonial custom. The master and his overseer, standing by the cross erected before the little village of the plantation, waited for all the hands to assemble. Each man came, bearing the regulation bundle of forage for the animals, and laying the package of herbs before him, removed his hat. Then all, women and men, would kneel down and repeat in unison the *Je vous salue, Marie,* the *Notre Père,* and the Creed, — as the stars thrilled out, and the yellow glow died behind the peaks.

. . . Often, when the nights were clear and warm, the slaves would assemble after the evening meal, to hear stories told by the *libres-de-savane* (old men and women exempted from physical labor), — those curious stories which composed the best part of the unwritten literature of a people forbidden to read. In those days, such oral literature gave delight to adults as well as to children, to *békés* as well as to negroes: it even exerted some visible influence upon colonial character. Every *da* was a story-teller. Her recitals first developed in the white child intrusted to her care the power of fancy, — Africanizing it, perhaps, to a degree that after-education could not totally remove, — creating a love of the droll and the extraordinary. One did not weary of hearing these stories often repeated; — for they were told with an art impossible to describe; and the little songs or refrains belonging to each — sometimes composed of African words, more often of nonsense-rhymes imitating the *bamboula* chants and *caleinda* improvisations, — held a weird charm which great musicians have confessed. And furthermore, in these *contes créoles,* — whether of purely African invention, or merely African adaptation of old-world folk-lore and fable, — the local color is marvellous: there is such a reflection of colonial thought and life as no translation can preserve. The scenes are laid among West Indian woods and hills, or sometimes in the quaintest quarter of an old colonial port. The European cottage of folk-tale becomes the tropical *case* or *ajoupa,* with walls of bamboo and roof of dried cane-leaves; — the Sleeping Beauties could never be discovered in their primeval forest but by some *nègue-marron* or *chasseuchou;* — the Cinderellas and Princesses appear as beautiful half-breed girls, wearing a costume never seen in picture-books; — the fairies of old-world myth are changed into the Bon-Dié or the Virgin Mary; — the Bluebeards and giants turn into *quimboiseurs* and devils; — the devils themselves (except when they yawn to show the fire in their throats) so closely resemble the half-nude *travailleurs,* with their canvas trousers and *mouchouè-fautas* and other details of costume, as not to be readily recognized: it requires keen inspection to detect the diabolic signs, — the red hair, crimson eyes, and horn-roots under the shadowing of the enormous " mule-food hat " or the *chapeau-bacoué.*

Then the Bon-Dié, the " good God," figures as the best and kindest of

old *békés,* — an affable gray planter whose *habitation* lies somewhere in the clouds over the *Montagne Pelée:* you can see his "sheep" and his "*choux-caraïbes*" sometimes in the sky. And the breaker of enchantments is the parish priest, — *Missié labbé,* — who saves pretty naughty girls by passing his stole about their necks. . . . It was at Anse-Marine that Youma found most of the tales she recounted to Mayotte, when the child became old enough to take delight in them.

. . . So the life had been in the valley plantation for a hundred years, with little varying. Doubtless there were shadows in it, — sorrows which never found utterance, — happenings that never had mention in the verses of any *chantrelle,* — days without song or laughter, when the fields were silent. . . . But the tropic sun ever flooded it with dazzling color; and great moons made rose-light over it; and always, always, out of the purple vastness of the sea, a mighty breath blew pure and warm upon it, — the breath of the winds that are called unchanging: *les Vents Alizés.*

III

In the morning Youma usually took Mayotte to the river to bathe, — in a clear shallow pool curtained with bamboos, where there were many strange little fish to be seen; — sometimes in the evening, an hour before the sunsetting, she would take her to the sea-beach, to enjoy the breeze and watch the tossing of the surf. But during the heat of the day, the child was permitted to view the wonder-world of the plantation only from the verandas of the house; and the hours seemed long. The cutting of the cane in the neighboring fields to the playing of the drum, — the coming and going of the wagons creaking under their loads of severed stems, — the sharpening of cutlasses at the grindstone, — the sweet smell of the *vesou,* — the rumble of the machines, — the noisy foaming of the little stream turning the wheel of the mill: all the sights and odors and sounds of plantation life filled her with longing to be out amidst them. What tantalized her most was the spectacle of the slave children playing on the grass-plot and about the buildings, — playing funny games in which she longed to join.

— "I wish I was a little negress," she said one day, as she watched them from the porch.

— "Oh!" exclaimed Youma in astonishment . . . "and why?"

— "Because then you would let me run and roll in the sun."

— "But the sun does not hurt little negroes and negresses; and the sun would make you very sick, doudoux. . . ."

— "And that is why I wish I was a little negress."

— "It is not nice to wish that!" declared Youma, severely.

— "Why is it not nice?"

— "Fie! . . . wish to be an ugly little negress!"

— "You are a negress, da, — or nearly the same thing, — and you are not ugly at all. You are beautiful, da; you look like chocolate."

— "Is it not much prettier to look like cream?"

— "No: I like chocolate better than cream . . . tell me a story, da."

It was the only way to keep her quiet. She was four years old, and had developed an extraordinary passion for stories. The story *Montala,* of the wizard orange-tree which grew to heaven; — the story *Mazinlin-guin,* of the proud girl who married a goblin; — the story of the Zombi-bird whose feathers were colored "with the colors of other days," — the bird that sang in the stomachs of those who ate it, and then made itself whole again; — the story of La Belle, whose godmother was the Virgin; — the story of Pié-Chique-à, who learned to play the fiddle after the devil's manner; — the story of Colibri, the Humming-Bird, who once owned the only drum there was in the world, and would not lend it when the Bon-Dié wanted to make a road, although the negroes said they could not work without a drum; — the story of Nanie Rosette, the greedy child, who sat down upon the Devil's Rock and could not get up again, so that her mother had to hire fifty carpenters to build a house over her before midnight; — the wonderful story of Yé, who found an old blind devil roasting snails in the woods, and stole the food out of the old devil's calabash, but was caught by him, and obliged to carry him home and feed him for ever so long . . . these and many more such tales had been told to little Mayotte already, with the effect of stimulating her appetite for more. If these tales did not form the supreme pleasure of her stay at the plantation, they at least enhanced and colored all her other pleasures, — spreading about reality an atmosphere deliciously unreal, — imparting a fantastic personality to lifeless things, — filling the shadows with *zombis,* — giving speech to shrubs and trees and stones . . . even the canes talked to her, *chououa-chououa,* like old whispering Babo, the *libre-de-savane.* Each habitant of the plantation, — from the smallest black child to tall Gabriel, or "Gabou," the *commandeur* of all, — realized for her some figure of the *contes;* and each spot of hill or shore or ravine visited in her morning walks with Youma, furnished her with the scenery for some impossible episode. . . .

— "Mayotte!" exclaimed Youma; — "you know one must not tell stories in the daytime, unless one wants to see *zombis* at night!"

— "No, da! . . . tell me one . . . I am not afraid, da."

— "Oh! the little liar! . . . You are afraid, — very much afraid of *zombis.* And if I tell you a story you will see them to-night."

— "Doudoux-da, no! — tell me one. . . ."

— "You will not wake me up to-night," and tell me you see *zombis?*"

— "No, da, — I promise."

— "Well, then, for this once," — said Youma, uttering the traditional

words which announce that the Creole story-teller is ready, — "*bobonne fois?*"

— "*Toua fois bel conte!*" cried the delighted child. And Youma began: —

Dame Kélément

Long, long ago there lived an old woman who everybody said was a witch, and in league with the devil. And nearly all the bad things said about her were true.

One day a poor little girl lost her way in the woods. After she had walked until she could not walk any more, she sat down and began to cry. She cried for a long, long time.

All about her she could see nothing but trees and lianas; — all the ground was covered with slippery green roots; and the trees were so high, and the lianas so woven between them, that there was very little light. She was lost in the *grands bois* — the great woods which swarm with serpents. . . .

All at once, while she sat there crying, she heard strange sounds quite near her, — sounds of singing and dancing.

She got up and walked towards the sounds. Looking through the trees she saw the same old woman that people used to talk about, riding on a *balai-zo*, and dancing round and round in a ring with ever so many serpents and *crapaud-làde* — great ugly toads. And they were all singing:

Kingué,
Kingué;
Vonvon
Malato,
Vloum-voum!
Jambi,
Kingué,
Tou galé,
Zo galé,
Vloum!

The little girl stood there stupid with fright: she could not even cry any more.

But the old woman had seen the leaves move; and she came with a sort of fire playing all round her, and asked the little girl: —

— "What are you doing in the *razié?*"

— "Mother, I lost my way in the woods." . . .

— "Then, my child, you must come to the house with me. . . . You might undo me, unravel me, destroy me if you had a chance."

The little girl did not understand all that the other woman said; for the wicked old creature was talking about matters that only sorcerers know.

By the time they got to the house, the poor child was very tired: she sat down on a calabash which served the witch for a chair. Then she saw the old woman light two fires on the earth floor, with torch-gum — which

smells like incense. On one fire she placed a big pot full of *manman-chou, camagnioc,* yams, christophines, bananas, devil's egg-plants (*melongène-diabe*), and many herbs the little girl did not known the names of. On the other fire she began to broil some toads, and an earth-lizard, — *zanoli-té.*

At noon the old woman swallowed all that as if it was nothing at all; — then she looked at the little girl, who was nearly dead for hunger, and said to her: —

— " Until you can tell me what name I am called by, you will not get anything to eat." . . . Then she went away, leaving the little girl alone.

The little girl began to weep. Suddenly she felt something touching her. It was a big serpent, — the biggest she had even seen. She was so frightened that she almost died; — then she cried out: —

— *" Oti papa moin? — oti manman moin?*
Latitolé ké mangé moin! "

But the serpent did not do her any harm: he only rubbed his head fondly against her shoulder, and sang: —

— *"Bennemè, bennepè, — tambou belai!*
Yche p'accoutoumé tambou belai! "

The little girl cried out louder than before: —

— *" Oti papa moin? — oti manman moin?*
Latitolé ké mangé moin! "

But the serpent, still rubbing his head fondly against her, answered, singing very softly: —

— *" Bennepè, bennemè, — tambou belai!*
Yche p'accoutoumé tambou belai! "

Then when he saw she had become less afraid, he lifted his head close to her ear, and whispered something.

The moment she heard it she ran out of the house and into the woods again. There she began to ask all the animals she met to tell her the old witch's name.

She asked every four-footed beast; — she asked all the lizards and the birds. But they did not know.

She came to a big river, and she asked all the fishes. The fishes, one after another, made answer to her that they did not know. But the *cirique,* the river crab that is yellow like a plantain, — the cirique knew. The cirique was the only one in the whole world who knew the name. The name was *Dame Kélément.*

. . . Then the child ran back to the house with all her might; her little stomach was paining her so that she felt she could not bear the pain much longer. The old woman was already at the house, scraping some magnioc to make flour and *cassave.* . . . The little girl walked up to her, and said:

— " Give me to eat, *Dame Kélément.*"

Two flashes of fire leaped from the witch's eyes: she gave such a start that she nearly broke her head against the iron-stones that she balanced her pots on.

— "Child! you have got the better of me!" she screamed. "Take everything! — take it, take it! — eat, eat, eat! — all in the house is yours!"

Then she sprang through the door quick as a powder-flash: she seemed to fly through the fields and woods. . . . And she ran straight to the river; — for it was deep under the bed of the river that the Devil had buried the name which he had given her. She stood on the bank, and chanted: —

— "*Loche,* O loche! — was it you who told that my name was Dame Kélément?"

Then the loche, that is black like the black stones of the stream, lifted up its head, and cried: —

— "No, mamma! — no mamma! — it was not I who told that your name was Dame Kélément."

— "*Titiri,* O titiri! — tell me, was it any among you who told that my name was Dame Kélément?"

Then the titiri, the tiny transparent titiri, answered all together, clinging to the stones: —

— "No, mamma! — no, mamma! — it was not I who told that your name was Dame Kélément."

— "*Cribîche,* O cribîche! — was it you who told that my name was Dame Kélément?"

Then the cribîche, the great crawfish of the river, lifted up his head and his claws, and made answer: —

— "No, mamma! — no, mamma! — it was not I who told that your name was Dame Kélément."

— "*Tétart,* O tétart! — was it you who said that my name was Dame Kélément?"

And the tétart, that is gray like the gray rocks of iron to which it holds fast, made answer, saying: —

— "No, mamma! — no, mamma! — it was not I who told them that your name was Dame Kélément."

— "*Dormeur,* O dormeur! — was it you who told that my name was Dame Kélément?"

And the dormeur, the lazy dormeur, that sleeps in the shadow of the rocks, awoke and rose and made answer: —

— "No, mamma! — no, mamma! — it was not I who told them that your name was Dame Kélément."

— "*Matavalé,* O matavalé! — was it you that said my name was Dame Kélément?"

And the matavalé, the shining matavalé, that flashes like copper when the sun touches his scales, opened his mouth and answered: —

— "No, mamma! — no, mamma! — I never said that your name was Dame Kélément!"

— "*Milet! — bouc! — pisquette! — zangui! — zhabitant?* — was it any one among you who told that my name was Dame Kélément? "

But they all cried out: —

— "No, no, no, mamma! — none of us ever said that your name was Dame Kélément."

— "*Cirique,* O cirique! — was it you who said my name was Dame Kélément? "

Then the cirique lifted up his eyes and his yellow claws, and screamed: —

— "Yes, you old wretch! — yes, you old witch! — yes, you old malediction! — yes, it was I who said that your name was Dame Kélément! " . . .

The moment she heard those words she stamped on the ground so hard that the Devil heard her, and opened a great hole at her feet; and she leaped into it head-first. And the ground closed over her. Two days after, there grew up from the place a clump of the weed they call *arrête-nègue,* — the plant that is all thorns.

Now while this was happening, the serpent had turned into a man; — for the old witch had changed a man into that serpent. He took the little girl by the hand, and led her to her mother.

But they came back again next day to search the old woman's cabin. They found in it seven casks filled with the bones of dead people; and also ever so much silver and gold, — more than enough to make the little girl rich. When she got married, there was the finest wedding ever seen in this country.

. . . Mayotte's morning visits to the river with Youma had furnished her with material for the imaginative scenery of the last part of this foolish little story, which delighted her so much that she made her nurse repeat it over and over again. She had seen the crawfish show their heads above the pools; she had caught the *titiri* in her little hands; she knew by sight the *loche* and the *tétart,* the *matavalé* and the *zhabitant,* the *dormeur* and the *cirique.* She also knew — by painful experience — the *arrête-nègue.* Dame Kélément, she fancied, must have had a face like old Tanga's when angry; and the little girl who lost her way in the woods must have looked just like a certain little black girl whom Tanga often had to scold, and who used to cry in the most extraordinary way: "*Aïe-yaïe-yaïe-yaïe-yaïe-yaïe!* "

But in the midst of her ecstasy, a faint fear came to her with the recollection of Youma's warning. . . .

— "Da," she asked, timidly, "I will not see zombis to-night, will I? "

— "Ah! you must not ask me to tell stories in the daytime any more," said Youma, guardedly.

— "But tell me, I won't see them to-night, — will I? "

— "If you see them," replied Youma, without mercy, "call me! — I will make them go away."

IV

Youma was alone in the house that night with the child; for M. Desrivières had ridden over to Sainte-Marie, and the servants occupied an adjoining building. . . . She was roused from her sleep by hearing the child cry: —

— "*Da, oh da! — moin pè!*"

The tiny lamp left burning before the images of the saints had gone out; — little Mayotte was afraid.

— "*Pa pè,*" — called Youma, quickly rising to caress her, — "*mi da-ou, chè.*"

— "Oh! there is Something in the room, *da!*" said the child. She had heard stealthy sounds.

— "No, doudoux; you have been dreaming. . . . Da will light the lamp for you."

She felt for the matches on the little night-table, — could not find them, — remembered she had left them in the adjoining salon, — moved towards the door; — and her foot suddenly descended upon something that sent a cold shock through all her blood, — something clammy and chill, that lived! Instantly she threw all the weight of her lithe strong body upon that foot — the left: she never could tell why; — perhaps the impulse was instinctive. Under her naked sole the frigid life she strove to crush writhed with a sudden power that nearly threw her down; and in the same moment she felt something wind round her ankle, over her knee, wrapping the flesh from heel to thigh with bruising force . . . the folds of a serpent!

— "*Tambou!*" she muttered between her teeth, — and hardened her muscles against the tightening coil, and strengthened the pressure of her foot upon the unseen enemy. . . . The foot of the half-breed, never deformed by shoes, retains prehensile power, — grasps like a hand; — the creature writhed in vain to escape. Already the cold terror had passed; and Youma felt only the calm anger of resolve: hers was one of those semi-savage natures wherein fear rarely lives beyond the first moment of nervous surprise. She called softly to the little one.

— "*Ti doudoux?*"

— "Da?"

— "Do not move till I tell you: stay in bed; there is a *bête* in the room."

— "*Aïe, aïe!*" sobbed the frightened child, — "what is it, da?"

— "Do not be afraid, cocotte: I am holding it, and it cannot bite you, unless you get up. I am going to call for Gabriel: do not stir, dear."

And Youma called, with all the power of her clear voice:

— "*Sucou! — sucou! Eh! Gabou!*" . . .

— "What is it? — what is it, da?" sobbed the little girl.

— " Do not cry like that, or I will get angry! How can I see what it is in the dark? " . . .

She called again and again for aid. . . . *Bon-Dié!* how powerful the creature was! — the pressure of the coil became a numbing pain. Her strength was already beginning to weaken under the obstinate, icy, ever-increasing construction. What if the cramp should come to help it? . . . Or was it the entering of venom into her blood that made those strange tinglings and tremblings? . . . She had not felt herself stricken; — but only the month before a plantation-hand had been bitten in the dark without feeling it; and they could not save him. . . . *" Eh! Gabou! "* . . . Even the servants in the pavilion seemed to sleep like dead. And if the child should leave the bed in spite of her warning? . . .

— " Oh! they are coming, da! " cried Mayotte. " Gabou is coming! " She had seen the flash of his lantern through the slatted shutters. " But the door is locked, da! "

— " Stay in bed, Mayotte! — if you move it will bite you! " The salon filled with voices and sound of feet; then there was a pushing at the bedroom door.

— " It is locked," called Youma; — " break it! — smash it in! — I cannot move! "

. . . A crash! — the room filled with a flare of lanterns; and Youma saw that the livid throat was under her foot; — the hideous head vainly strained at her heel.

"Pa bouèné piess! " cried the voice of the *commandeur.* " Do not stir for your life, my girl! Keep still for your life! Stay just as you are! "

She stood like a bronze. Gabriel was beside her, his naked cutlass in his hand. . . . *Quim fò! quim fò! — pas bouèné piess, piess, piess! "* . . . Then she saw the gleam of his steel pass, and the severed head leap to the wainscoting, where it fell gaping, — the eyes still burning like sparks of charcoal. In the same moment the coil loosed and dropped, and Youma lifted her foot; — the body of the reptile lashed the planking, twisted, strove to crawl as if to join the head; — again and again the cutlass descended, and each lopped fragment nevertheless moved.

— " Are you hurt, my daughter? " a kind voice asked, — the voice of M. Desrivières: he had seen it all.

— *" Pa couè maîte,"* she answered, looking at her foot. But she did not know. He led her to a chair, knelt down and began the examination himself; while Mayotte climbed to Youma's neck, clinging and kissing and crying: " Did he bite you, dear da? — did he bite you? " . . . " No, doudoux; no, cocotte: do not be afraid! " She was telling the truth unawares: the serpent had never been able to use his fangs; but the seaming of his coil remained upon the smooth red skin as if branded. . . . Gabriel had dropped his cutlass and detached the long *mouchoir-fautas* about his waist to make a ligature: he was the *panseur* of the plantation.

— "Never mind, my son," said M. Desrivières: "she has not been bitten."

Gabriel stood dumb for astonishment.

Meanwhile the room had filled with armed plantation-hands, and a clamor of exclamations: . . . "*Die Seignè! qui sépent!*" . . . "*Mi tête-là ka lè modé toujou!*" . . . "*C'est guiabe mênm!*" . . . "*Moceauà ka rimié pou yo joinne!*" . . . "*Aïe! Youma tchoque! — ouill papa!*" . . . And a serpent nearly six feet in length! No one had ever heard of such a feat before. When Youma told how it happened, — very simply and very calmly, — there was a dead hush of admiration. It was first broken by the rough basso of the commandeur, exclaiming: — "*Ouaill! ou brave, mafi! — joute! ou sévè!*" . . . "*Severe,*" the negro's strongest adjective to qualify courage, retains in his patois something of quaint and reverential meaning, — something of that sense which survives in our own modern application of it to art and truth: the Creole now rarely uses it except in irony, but Gabriel uttered it with unconscious exquisiteness; and M. Desrivières himself applauded.

— "*Doudoux-da-moin!*" cried Mayotte, smothering her nurse with caresses; — "*ti cocotte-da-moin! . . . Mais bo y, papoute! — bo y!*" she pleaded, to M. Desrivières. He smiled and kissed Youma's forehead.

— "And it was all my fault," declared Mayotte, beginning to sob again: "I made her tell me stories in the daytime."

But that serpent was no zombi: they found his trail and followed it to a hole which some rat had gnawed in the planking of the salon, under a sideboard.

V

From that night Youma became the object of a sort of cult at Anse-Marine; — there is no quality the black admires so much as physical courage. The entire *atelier* began to evince for her a respect almost fetichistic. The girl's heroism had conquered any petty dislikes which her city manners and natural reserve might have provoked, and had hopelessly crushed the small jealousies of house-servants who imagined themselves supplanted by a stranger in the master's home. These now only sought to obtain her good-will, to win her smile; — the plantation declared itself proud of her, — boasted of her prowess to the slaves of neighboring estates; — the hands saluted her when she passed, as if she were a mistress; and the improvisors of the *caleinda* chants celebrated her praises in their *belai*. Even the overseer, M. de Comislles, though a rigid disciplinarian, no longer addressed her as *mafi*, "my daughter," but as *Manzell*, — Manzell Youma.

But what secretly pleased her above all was the attention of Gabriel. Gabriel appeared to have taken a sudden fancy to her. Although the busiest man on the estate, he found time to show his friendship by little kindnesses

and courtesies of which one could scarcely have believed so rude a nature capable. He invented opportunities to meet her during the midday respite from labor, and of evenings, — before or after making his nightly round to see that all the regulations of cleanliness and good order had been obeyed in every cabin, — that clothing had been washed, and refuse removed. His visits were necessarily brief; — they were also strangely silent: he rarely spoke, except when asked a direct question, or when teased by Mayotte into taking her on his knees and answering her prattle. More usually he would simply seat himself on the veranda close to Youma's rocking-chair, and listen to her chat with the child, or her story-telling, — seldom even turning his face towards her, but seeming to watch the noisy life of the *cases*. But almost at every visit he would bring something for the child, — knowing she would share it with her da, — some gift of fruit gathered in his own garden: such as a bunch of figues, which are tiny dessert bananas scarcely two inches long; — or a *zabricot* (tropical apricot), — that singular fruit the ancient Haytians held sacred as the food of ghosts, — a colossal plum, as large as the largest turnip, with musky vermilion flesh, and a kernel big as a duck's egg; — or an odorous branch cut from a *zorange-macaque* tree, heavy with mandarines; — or a *fouitt-defendu,* — the same, according to Creole tradition, which Eve was tempted by the Serpent to eat, — a sort of huge orange larger than a pumpkin, with a luscious pink pulp. . . . One day, — the day of Mayotte's *fête,* — Gabriel brought a very pretty present: a basket he had himself woven of bamboo strips and liana stems, filled with samples of almost everything the estate produced. There was a beautiful little sugar-loaf, — a package of *batons-caco,* or sticks of chocolate, — a little *coui,* or half-calabash, filled with brown sugar, — a can of refined syrup, — a *painmi,* or boiled-maize cake, sweetened, and wrapped in a piece of balisier leaf tied with a *ti-liane-raziè;* — some *tablettes* of grated cocoa candied in liquid sugar; — and a nice bundle of Chambéry cane, tied with a cane leaf. . . . Another day, when Youma had taken the child to the river for her morning bath, she found there, fixed upon the bank beside a little pool, a broad and handsome rustic bench, built of the long tough stems of the *pommier-rose,* with split bamboos for the back and the seat: Gabriel had made it, working at night, and had carried it to the river before daybreak, as a surprise for Youma.

. . . Silent as Gabriel's visits were, they began to exert an influence on Youma. She found in them an unfamiliar pleasure, — became accustomed to look for them with unconscious eagerness; — even felt vaguely unhappy when he did not come. And yet, after having failed to see him for a longer time than usual, she never asked what had prevented his visit; — she would not have confessed, even to herself, that she feared his indifference. He, on the other hand, never offered an explanation. The two strange natures comprehended each other without speech, — drew and dominated each other in a dumb, primitive, half-savage way.

. . . He brought one afternoon a fine *sapota,* — that fruit in whose smooth flushed swarthy skin Creole fancy finds the semblance of half-breed beauty. Within its flat black seed, between the two halves of the kernel, lies a pellicle, — creamy, fragile, and shaped like a heart, — which it requires dexterity to remove without breaking. Lovers challenge each other to do it as a test of affection.

— " Mayotte," said Youma, after they had eaten the fruit together, — " I want to see if you love me." . . . She cracked the flinty shell of a seed between her teeth, — then tried to remove the pellicle, and broke it.

— " Oh, da! " cried the child, " it is not true! — you know I love you." . . .

— " Piess, piess! " declared Youma, teasing her; — " you do not love me one bit! "

But Gabriel asked for a seed, and she gave him one. Rude and hard as his fingers were, he took out the little heart intact, and gave it to Mayotte.

— " *Ou ouè!* " he said, maliciously; — " *da ou ainmein moin passé ou!* " (Your da loves me better than you.)

— " It is not true! — no, *cocotte!* " Youma assured the child. But she did not feel sure of what she said.

. . . When the cane-cutting season was over, Gabriel asked and obtained leave to go to La Trinité one holiday morning. He returned at evening, later than the hour at which he was accustomed to find the young *capresse* on the veranda; but she was still there. Seeing him approach, she rose with the child asleep in her arms, and put her finger to her lips.

" *Quimbé!* " whispered Gabriel, slipping into Youma's hand something flat and square, wrapped in tissue-paper: then, without another word, he strode away to his quarters.

When Mayotte had been put to bed, Youma looked at the packet. . . . A little card-board box: within it, upon a layer of pink cotton, shone two large light circles of plain gold, — barbaric ear-rings such as are only made by colonial goldsmiths, but well suited to the costume and bronze skin of the race of color. . . . Youma already possessed far finer jewelry; but Gabriel had walked thirty kilometres for these.

He smiled as he passed by her window in the morning and saw them shimmering in her ears. Her acceptance of the gift signified assent to a question unspoken, — the question which civilized men most fear to ask, but which the Creole slave could ask without words.

VI

" WHAT is it, my son? " said M. Desrivières, as Gabriel, who had asked to speak with him alone, stood nervously twirling a great straw hat between his fingers.

"*Maîte,*" he began, shyly, — "*moin ainmein ti bonne ou.*" . . .

"Youma?" queried M. Desrivières in surprise.

"*Mais oui, maîte.*"

"Is Youma willing to marry you?"

"*Mais oui, maîte.*"

For a few moments M. Desrivières could make no reply: the possibility of a union between the two had never occurred to him, and Gabriel's revelation almost shocked him. The *commandeur* was certainly one of the finest physical men of his race, — young, industrious, intelligent; but he would make a rough mate indeed for a girl brought up as Youma had been. She was also a slave, without education; but she had received a domestic training that gave her a marked superiority above her class, and she had moral qualities more delicate by far than those of Gabriel. . . . Above all, she had been the companion of Aimée's childhood, and afterwards her friend rather than her servant: the influence of Aimée had done much for her; — something of Aimée's manner, and of Aimée's thought, had become a part of her own. . . . No; Madame Peyronnette would never hear of such a union: the mere idea of it would revolt her like a brutality!

— "But, Gabriel," he answered at last, "Youma does not belong to me. She belongs to my mother-in-law."

— "Master, I know she belongs to Madame Peyronnette," said Gabriel, making the rim of his *chapeau-bacouè* revolve still more quickly; — "but I thought you would like to do something for me."

The planter smiled at the suggestion. . . . He had often expressed to Gabriel the wish to see him marry, — had even promised to give him a handsome wedding when he should have made a choice. But Gabriel seemed in no haste to choose. Then it became known that, while he remained indifferent to the girls of Anse-Marine, he was in the habit of making furtive visits to a neighboring estate; and M. Desrivières himself went there to discover the object of those visits. He found it in the person of a handsome *griffone;* and, wishing to give Gabriel an agreeable surprise, bought the girl for fifteen hundred francs, and brought her back with him. But from the day that she belonged to the plantation, Gabriel paid no further attention to her whatever. Secretly, he resented his master's intermeddling in the matter; and nevertheless, in spite of that episode, it now seemed to him quite natural to beg M. Desrivières to buy Youma for him. . . . The planter, however, felt no anger; — the incident rather amused him. He valued Gabriel highly, and understood him well: — a nature impatient of control, but capable of exerting it to an extraordinary degree. As a *commandeur* he was inestimable; as a *travailleur* he would have been almost impossible to manage. His former owner, a *petit blanc,* had been glad to sell him, with the frank assurance that he was "sullen, incorrigible, and dangerous." De Comislles, who purchased him, knew it was a case of "fine stock" unappreciated; and often boasted of the bargain he had made.

— "I cannot buy her for you, my son," said M. Desrivières kindly. "Youma is not for sale. Madame Peyronnette will not sell her at any price, — even to me. . . . I am going to the city to-morrow, and will ask my mother-in-law if she will let Youma marry you: that is all I can do."

Gabriel ceased to twirl his hat: he stood silent for a little while, with his eyes cast down, and a decidedly sinister expression in his face. He had never thought that Youma's fate might not be decided even by M. Desrivières's wealth and influence: a suspicion that the planter's assurances were false, momentarily darkened his thoughts. Then he looked up, bowed to M. Desrivières, and with a hoarsely muttered "*Mèçi, maître,*" withdrew.

— "It is Youma who will suffer the most," thought M. Desrivières.

VII

Madame Peyronnette's decision was just what M. Desrivières had expected. She was even more astonished by Youma's choice than he had been, — could only attribute it to a fascination purely physical, or, as she termed it, animal: the one peril among all others that she had especially feared for Youma. She even reproached her son-in-law, — held him responsible for the affair; and finally insisted upon Youma's immediate return to the city. She did not wish that another should be Mayotte's nurse; but whether Mayotte remained at Anse-Marine or not, Youma should return. It was time at all events that the child should begin to learn something more important than sucking sugar-cane and playing with little negroes; — besides, she had become quite strong, and the city was exceptionally healthy. Youma might continue to live with the Desrivières at the Fort; but a girl innocent enough to become enamoured of the first common negro who made love to her, needed looking after; and Madame Peyronnette intended to make sure that no more such things should happen. . . . M. Desrivières offered no opposition to his mother-in-law's wishes; he announced his intention to return to town himself as soon as possible, and bring Mayotte and her nurse with him.

. . . To Youma this decision brought a shock of pain that stupefied her too much for tears. Then, with the instinctive, automatic resentment that sudden pain provokes, came to her also for the first time the full keen sense of the fact that she was a slave, — helpless to resist the will that struck her. Every disappointment she had ever known, — each constraint, reprimand, refusal, suppression of an impulse, every petty pang she had suffered since a child, — crowded to her memory, scorched it, blackened it; filled her with the delusion that she had been unhappy all her life, and with a hot secret anger against the long injustice imagined, breaking down her good sense, and her trained habit of cheerful resignation. In that instant she almost hated her godmother, hated M. Desrivières, hated everybody . . . except Gabriel. At his advent into her life, something long held in subjection within

her, — something like a darker passionate second soul, full of strange impulses and mysterious emotions, — had risen to meet him, bursting its bonds, and winning mastery at last: the nature of the savage race whose blood dominated in her veins.

Its earlier rebellions had produced no graver result than occasional secret fits of melancholy, — beginning after Aimée's departure to school, when Youma was first taken into an existence high-hedged about in those days with formalities extraordinary. Except during the evenings of a brief theatrical season, and the occasion of a select ball, the Creole ladies remained almost cloistered in their homes from Sunday to Sunday, scarcely leaving their apartments except to go to church, — never entering a store under any circumstances, and having even the smallest details of their shopping done for them by slaves. Enervated by a climate that would probably have exterminated the European element within a few generations but for the constant infusion of fresh blood from abroad, the white women of the colonies could adapt themselves without pain to this life of cool and elegant seclusion. But Youma was of the race of sun-lovers. The very privileges accorded her, the very training given to her as a sort of adopted child, had tended rather to contract her natural life than to expand it. In the country she had found larger opportunities for out-door enjoyment, and freedom from formal restraints of a certain kind; but even in the country her existence was confined by her duty as a nurse, — compressed into the small sphere of a child's requirements. Youma was too young to be a *da*. For the *da* there were no pleasures. The responsibilities of such a place, — requiring nothing less than absolute self-sacrifice, — were confided as a rule only to slaves who had been mothers, who had fulfilled the natural destiny of woman. But Youma had scarcely ceased to be a child, when she found herself again sentenced to act, think, and speak as a child, — for the sake of a child not her own. Her magnificent youth dumbly protested against this perpetual constraint. Despite that sense of personal dignity Madame Peyronnette had spared no pains to cultivate in her, — the feeling of having social superiority among her class, — she sometimes found herself envying the lot of others who would have gladly changed places with her: the girls who travelled singing over the sunny mountain roads, the negresses working the fields, chanting *belai* to the tapping of the *ka*. Youma felt a painful pleasure in watching them. She suffered so much from the weariness of physical inaction; — she was so tired of living in shadow, of resting in rocking-chairs, of talking baby talk, — just as in other years she had been tired of dwelling behind closed shutters, and broidering and sewing in a half-light, and hearing conversations which she could not understand. Still, at such moments, she had judged herself ungrateful, — almost wicked, — and battled with her discontent, and conquered it, — until Gabriel came.

Gabriel! . . . He seemed to open to her a new world full of all that her being longed for, — light, and joy, and melody: he appeared to her in some

way blended with the freedom of air and sun, of river and sea, — fresh scents of wood and field, — the long blue shadows of morning, — the rose-light of tropical moonrise, — and the songs of the *chantrelles*, — and the merriment of dances under the cocoa-palms to the throbbing thunder of the drums. Gabriel, so calm, so strong, so true! her man of all men, made for her by the Bon-Dié; — Gabriel, who, though a slave, could compel the esteem of his master; — Gabriel, for whom she prayed each night, and laid before the Virgin's image her little offering of wild flowers; — Gabriel, with whom she would be so happy, even in the poorest of *ajoupas*, — for whom she would gladly give liberty if she had it, or even her life if it could do him service. . . . She wished to be beautiful — and they said she was beautiful (*yon bel-bois*, like a shapely tree, like a young palm) — only for his sake. . . . And they were going to take him from her, — pretending that he was not good enough for her (as if *they* could know!), — because they wanted her to remain with them always, to suffer for them always, to live in darkness and silence, like a *manicou*. And they had the power to be cruel to her, to take him away from her! The world was all wrong, — wrong at least for her. Whomsoever she loved was taken from her; first her mother, Douceline; then Aimée Desrivières; — now Gabriel.

. . . It was the morning after his arrival from the city that M. Desrivières had called her aside to tell her: she had just returned from the river with Mayotte, after giving the child her morning bath. He had spoken kindly, but very frankly, — in a way that left no hope possible.

For a long time she sat speechless and motionless in her room: then, obeying the child's wish, went out with her upon the veranda. The day was exquisitely clear, with a tepid wind from the sea. Above her, on the nearer side of the valley, sounded the mellow booming of a *tambou-belai*, and a chorus of African song. A troop of field-hands were making a new path to the summit of one of the mornes; the old path having been washed away by recent heavy rains. The overseer had surveyed the course for it, marked out the zigzag with stretched cords; and the workers were slowly descending in a double line, — all singing, — all the hoes and rammers keeping time to the drum rhythm. Sometimes the men would throw up their hoes in the air and catch them again, or exchange them in a fling, without losing the measure of the movement. And there was a girl, — young Chrysaline, — carrying a tray with tin cups, *dobannes* of water, and a pitcher of liquor; — serving drink all round at intervals; for the work was hot. . . . Youma looked for a tall figure in blue cotton shirt and white canvas trousers at the head of the column. But Gabriel was not visible. Another was acting in his place, overseeing the task, and keeping a watch for serpents, — a black man, Marius.

Only three days more; and she would have to leave Anse-Marine, — would see Gabriel no more. . . . They were going to return to the dull hot

city in the dullest and hottest month of the year. . . . Did Gabriel know? . . . Or was it because he knew, that she did not see him among the workers? She felt that if he knew, he would contrive some chance to speak with her. . . .

Even as this feeling came, Gabriel appeared before the house, — made her a sign to leave the child and come to him.

He laid his hand caressingly upon her shoulder, and whispered: —

" The master told me all this morning . . . he is going to take you away from us?"

" Yes," she answered, sadly; — " we are going back to the city."

" When? "

" Monday coming."

" It is only Thursday," he said, with a peculiar smile. . . . " Doudoux, you know that once they have you back in the city again, they will never let you see me, never! — yes, you know it! "

" But, Gabriel," she answered, with a choking in her voice, — hurt by the tone of pleading in his words: " what can I do? — you know there is not any way."

" There *is* a way," he interrupted, almost roughly.

Wondering, she looked at him, — a new vague hope dawning in her large eyes.

" There is a way, my girl," he repeated, " if you are brave. Look! "

He pointed beyond the valley, over the sea to the north-east, where loomed a shape of phantasmal beauty, — a vision only seen in fairest weather. Out of the purpling ocean circle, the silhouette of Dominica towered against the amethystine day, — with crown of ghostly violet peaks, and clouds far curled upon them, like luminous wool of gold.

" *Doudoux, in one night!* " . . . he whispered, watching her face.

She caught his meaning. . . . Freedom for the slave who could set his foot on British soil!

" Gabriel! " called the voice of M. de Comislles.

" *Eti!* " he shouted in answer. . . . " Think about it, my girl, — *chongé, chongé bien chè!* "

" Gabriel! " again cried the voice of the overseer.

" *Ka vini!* " called Gabriel, running towards the summons.

. . . She returned to her accustomed place on the veranda, where Mayotte was playing with a black kitten. She scarcely heard the child's laughter, and joyous callings to her to look when the little animal performed some droll prank, — answered mechanically as if half awake: her gaze continued fixed upon the shining apparition in the horizon, that tempted her will with its vapory loveliness. Slowly, while she gazed, it took diaphanous pallor, — began to fade into the vast light. Then, as the sun

climbed higher, it passed mysteriously away: there remained only the clear-colored circling sea, the rounded spotlessness of the summer heaven. . . . But the luminous violet memory of it lingered with her, — burned into her thought.

She did not see Gabriel again that day. He seemed to avoid her purposely, — to give her time to reflect.

VIII

. . . Never a doubt of Gabriel's ability to carry out his project entered her mind: the possibilities of pursuit and capture, of encountering a *rafale* in that awful channel — or even worse; for the hurricane season had set in, — gave her little concern. What danger could she not brave for his sake? — anywhere with him she would feel secure.

But slowly the exaltation of her fancy began to calm. The totally unexpected suggestion of a means to frustrate the will of others, and to win all that she desired, had cooled the passion of her disappointment; and, with its cooling, her natural power of just reflection gradually returned. Then she felt afraid, — afraid of something in herself that she knew was wrong. For even in the first movement, the proposal of Gabriel had vaguely smitten her conscience, — startled her moral sense before she could weigh, however hastily, the results of abandoning her friends, her birthplace, her duties, — of declassing herself forever, — of losing the esteem of all who put trust in her. But now as she thought, — seriously thought, — she knew that a shame rose and tingled in her face. . . .

No — no — no! — it was not true that her life had been all unhappiness. She began to recall, — in shining soft succession, — many delightful days. Days of her childhood, above all, — with Aimée, when they played together in the great court of Madame Peyronnette's house in the high street — the beautiful sunny court with its huge-leaved queer plants and potted palms; — where the view of the splendid bay lay all open in blue light from the Grosse-Roche to Fond Corré; — with ships coming and going over the horizon, or drowsily swaying at anchor, — the court where each morning they used to feed the *zanolis,* the little green lizards of the *tonnelle,* who flashed down from the green vault of climbing vines to eat the crumbs thrown them! . . . Aimée, who shared all things with her, — even when a tall young lady. Aimée, whose dying hand clasped hers with such loving trust, — whose dying lips had whispered: — *" Youma, O Youma! you will love my child? — Youma, you will never leave her, whatever happens, while she is little? — promise, dear Youma! "* . . . And she had — promised. . . .

She saw again the face of Madame Peyronnette, smiling under its bands of silver hair, — smiling as when Youma felt her cheek stroked by the fine white hand that glimmered with rings; — as when she heard the gentle

assurance: — "You are my daughter, too, child — my beautiful dark daughter-in-God! You must be happy; — I want you to be happy! . . . And had she not really tried to make her so, — contrived for her, — planned for her, — expended much for her sake, that she might never have the right to envy others of her class? . . . And Youma thought of all the gifts, the New-Year surprises, — the perpetual comfort. She had always had a room apart, — a room overlooking the *tonnelle* with its vines and pommes-de-liane, where the humming-birds circled in gleams of crimson and emerald, — a little chamber full of sea-wind: she had never been allowed to lie on a simple mattress unrolled upon the floor, like a common domestic.

For Aimée's sake she had found scarcely less consideration in her second home, from Madame Desrivières and her son. And ever since Aimée's death, the kindness of M. Desrivières had been that of a father. He had trusted her to such a degree that he had never noticed Gabriel's visits.

. . . What would all these think of her? To whom did she owe most? — to them, whom she had known so long, and the kind lady who had brought her up with her own child, after having named her at the baptismal font; or to Gabriel, whom she had known only for one season? . . . Ah! never, — not even for his sake, could she be false to them! — the good God would never forgive her! . . . But Gabriel did not know: if he knew, he could not ask her to fly with him.

. . . Once more the darker side of her nature was quelled, — sank back sobbing to its old place. The cruel pain remained: but she lay down to rest that night with a strong resolve to seek Gabriel as soon as possible, and to say *No*.

And nevertheless her heart sank a little next morning, when Gabriel, striding by as she was taking the child to the river, said, in a low, hurried tone: —

— "Go to the beach this evening, at four o'clock. I will see you there. The gommier leaves for La Trinité with a cargo."

Then he was gone, before she could answer a word.

IX

A STRANGE coast is that on which the valley of Anse-Marine opens, — a coast of fantastic capes and rocks with sinister appellations, in which the Devil's name is sometimes mentioned. Black iron ore forms the high cliffs; but countless creepers tapestry them, and lianas everywhere dangle down to meet the shore fringe of *patate-bò-lanmè*, — the vivid green sea-vine, — crawling over a sand black as powdered jet. (Its thick leaves when broken show a sap white as milk; and it bears a beautiful carmine cup-

shaped flower.) The waves are very long, very heavy; — they crumble over with a crash that deafens, and ghostly uptossings of foam as of waving hands. The sea is never quiet there: north and south the *falaises* perpetually loom through a haze of tepid spray, — rising like smoke to the sun. . . . There is a Creole legend that it was not so in other years; — that a priest, mocked by fishermen, shook his black robe against the sea, and cursed it with the curse of eternal unrest. And the fishing-boats and the spread nets rotted on the beach, while men vainly waited for the sea to calm. . . . The foam-line never vanishes through the year: it only broadens or narrows, as the surf becomes, under the pressure of the trade-winds, more or less dangerous. Sometimes it whitens far up the river mouths, leaps to the summit of the cliffs, and shakes all the land, — though there is scarcely a breeze, and not one cloud in the sky. At such a time you will see that far out, even to the horizon, the flood is blue as lapis lazuli, and smooth as a mirror: the thunder and the foaming do not extend beyond the coast. That is a *raz-de-marée,* — a *raz-de-marée du fond:* the sea swinging from the depths, — rocking from the bottom. This spectacle may endure two, three, four days; and then cease mysteriously as it began.

For the *travailleur* of the eastern plantations, the only barrier between slavery and freedom was this wild sea. There were but few boats on the coast; — north of La Trinité, there were but few points from which a boat could be safely launched. But at Anse-Marine there was one such place, — a sort of natural cove in a promontory projecting into deep water from the southern end of the valley-opening, and curving so as to give a lee side. It was thence the gommier was launched to the sound of the drum; and a little boat was also kept there in a shed, — the master's private boat, — seldom used. This Gabriel knew how to handle well.

. . . Before the hour appointed Youma took Mayotte to the beach: the great heat of the day was spent, the strong wind was almost cool, and the cliffs were throwing shadow. A visit to this shore was a delight for the child. There were no pretty little shells like those thrown up by the tide at the Grosse-Roche of Saint Pierre, and the surf was too strong to permit of her wading, as she would have wished to do. But it was a joy to see it tumbling and flashing; and the black sand was full of funny yellow hairy-legged crabs, and little sea-roaches — *ravett-lanmè* — which had spades in their tails, to dig holes with; — and sometimes one might meet a baby turtle, just out of the egg, making its way to the water.

The children came soon after, — black and yellow, brown and red, — all in charge of Tanga's daughters, Zoune and Gambi, to see the gommier go out. The little ones were not allowed to venture fairly into the water for fear of accidents; but they could gambol on the skirts of the surf to their hearts' content. They screamed and leaped all together whenever a big wave would chase up the sand, whirling and hissing about their little bare feet.

Then the wagons appeared, moving along the cliff road, with their loads of rum and sugar: it was hard work for the mules, strong and fat as they were. . . . Youma heard Gabriel's voice urging them on, — helping the drivers.

Then a slim brown boy, naked as a bronze, appeared on horseback, — coming down to the beach at a gallop, riding without a saddle. It was the overseer's little groom, going to give M. de Comislles's horse a bath in the surf. The boy was scarcely more than a child, and the animal, — a black Porto Rico stallion, — very spirited; but the two knew each other. As the surf reached the horse's knees, the lad leaped down, and began to wash him. Then an immense breaker bursting, whelmed both almost out of sight in a quivering woolly sheet of foam. The horse seemed to like it, never moved: there was no fear for the boy, — he could swim like a *couliou.* He played about the horse, patted him, hugged his neck, threw water on him: when a heavy breaker came he would cling to the stallion's mane.

" *Yo kallé! yo kallé!* " cried the children at last, as a drum-roll vibrated from the launching-place: the freight had been stowed, the crew were in their places, the *tambouyé* on his perch. It was the signal to let go — " *lagué toutt* "; and all eyes turned to see the gommier rush into the water; and everybody shouted as she reached it safely, pitched, steadied again with the first plunge of the paddles, and started on her journey, to the merry measure of *Madame lèzhabitant.* The children stopped their play to watch; — and from the cliffs sounded a clapping of hands, and women's laughter, and jocose screams of *adié,* — as the long craft shot away to the open, — till the chant of the crew was lost in the voice of the surf, and the faces ceased to be distinguishable. Even then, for a minute or two the booming of the drum could be heard; but the gommier soon rounded the long point, and passed out of sight, making south. . . . The event of the day was over.

Tanga's daughters gathered their little flock, and left the beach; — the boy in the surf leaped to the horse's back, turned him, and off they went up the valley at a gallop, — shining like a group in metal, — to dry themselves in wind and sun; — the lookers-on disappeared from the cliffs; — and the empty wagons turned back rumbling to the plantation. . . . Youma still lingered, to Mayotte's great satisfaction. The child had found a cocoa-nut — empty, shrunken, and blackened by long pitching about in the waves. She amused herself by rolling it into the surf, and seeing it cast out again — always at some distance from where it had been thrown in; — and this so much diverted her that she did not notice Gabriel hastening towards them. . . . But Youma advanced to meet him.

— " *Doudoux-moin,*" he said, breathing quickly with the hurry of his coming, as he took her hand in both his own, — " listen well to what I am going to tell you. . . . The gommier has gone; — there will be no boat to pursue us: we can go tonight if you will be brave. . . . To-morrow we can be free, — to-morrow morning, doudoux! "

— " Ah! Gabriel . . ." she began. But he would not hear her: he spoke on so earnestly, so rapidly, that she could not interrupt him, telling her his hopes, his plans. He had a little money, — knew what he was going to do. They would buy a little place in the country, — (it was a beautiful country there, and everything was cheap, and there were no serpents!) — he could build a little house himself, — plant a fruit garden. . . . The master's boat was ready for their escape; — wind and sea were in their favor; — there would be no moon till after midnight; — there was nothing to fear. And with the coming sunrise they would be free.

He spoke of his love for her, — of the life they might live together, — of liberty as he imagined it, — of their children who would be free, — with naïve power of persuasion, and with a fulness that revealed how earnestly and long he had nourished his dream, — vividly imaging his thought by those strange Creole words which, like tropic lizards, change color with position. Not until he had said all that was in his heart, could Youma answer him, with the tears running down her cheeks: —

— " Oh! Gabriel! I cannot go! — do not tell me any more; I cannot go! " . . .

Then she stopped, — struck dumb by the sudden change in his face. As he dropped her hand, there was an expression in his eyes she had never seen before. But he did not fix them upon her: he turned, and folded his arms, and stared at the sea.

— " Doudoux," she went on, — " you would not let me speak. . . . I did as you told me; — I thought it all over, — over and over again. And the more I thought about it, the more I felt it could not be. . . . And you would not give me a chance to tell you," — she repeated, pleadingly, — touching his arm, — trying to draw his look again.

But he did not answer, — stood rigid and grim as the black rock behind him, — looking always to the horizon, where the place of his hope had been, — free Dominica, with its snakeless valleys, — all viewless now, veiled by the vapors of evening.

— " Gabriel," she persisted, caressingly, — " listen, doudoux." . . .

— " Ah! you will not come? " he said at last, — " you will not come? " . . . There was almost a menace in his voice, as he turned the wrath of his eyes upon her.

— " I cannot go, doudoux," she repeated with gentle force. " Listen to me . . . you know I love you? "

— *" Pa pàlé ça! — pa lapeine! "* he answered, bitterly. . . . " I offer you all that I have; — it is not enough for you. . . . I give you the chance to be free with me, and you tell me you prefer to remain a slave."

— " Oh, Gabriel! " she sobbed, — " can you reproach me like that? You know in your heart whether I love you."

— " Then you are afraid, — afraid of the sea? "

— " It is not that." . . .

— "*Ouill, mafi!* — I thought you brave! "

— " Gabriel," she cried, almost fiercely, " I am not afraid of anything except of doing wrong, — I am afraid of the Bon-Dié only."

— "*Qui Bon-Dié ça?* " he scoffed, — " the Bon-Dié of the békés? — the Bon-Dié of Manm-Peyronnette? "

— " You shall not talk that kind of talk to me, Gabriel! " she exclaimed, with eyes blazing, — " it brings bad luck! "

He looked at her in surprise at the sudden change in her manner, as, for the first time, her will rose to match his own.

— "*Ça ka pòté malhè, ou tenne?* " she repeated, meeting his gaze and mastering it. He turned sullenly to the sea again, and let her speak, — listening restively to her passionate explanation. . . . Afraid? — how little he knew her heart! But she had forgotten, because of him, what it was wicked to forget. She had done wrong even to think of going with him, — forsaking the godmother who had brought her up from an infant, — deserting the mistress who had cared for her like a daughter, — abandoning the child confided to her care, the child of Madame Desrivières, the child who loved her so much, who would suffer so much to lose her, — might even die; for she knew of a little one who had died for grief at having lost her *da*. No: it would be cruel, — it would be wicked, to leave her in such a way. . . .

— " And you leave me for a child, Youma, — a child not your own? " cried Gabriel. " You talk as if you were the only nurse in the world: there are plenty of *das*."

— " Not like me," said Youma, — " not at least for her. I have been mother to her since her own mother died. . . . But it is not the child only, Gabriel; — it is what I owe to those who loved and trusted me all these years." . . . And the old sweetness came back into her voice, while she asked: — " Doudoux, could you think me true, and see me thankless and false to those who have been good to me all my life? "

— " Good to you! " he burst out, with sudden bitterness. " Do you think them good because they do not happen to be bad? How good to you? Because they dress you beautifully, — give you a *belle jupe,* a calendered *madras,* a *collier-choux,* and put gold upon you that folks may cry: — ' See how madame . . . see how monsieur is generous to a slave! ' Give them? — no! — lend them only, — put them upon you for a showing: they are not yours! You can own nothing; you are a slave; you are naked as a worm before the law! You have no right to anything, — no, not even to what I gave you; — you have no right to become the wife of the man you choose; — you would have no right, if a mother, to care for your own child, — though you give half your life, all your youth, to nursing children of békés. . . . No, Youma, you were not brought up like your mistress's daughter. Why were you never taught what white ladies know? — why

were you never shown how to read and write? — why are you kept a slave? . . . Good to you? It was to their interest, my girl! — it repays them to-day, — since it keeps you with them, — when you could be free with me."

— "No, no, doudoux," protested the girl, — "you are not just! You do not know my godmother; you do not know what she has been for me; — you could never make me believe she has not been generous and kind! . . . Do you think, Gabriel, that people can be good only for a motive? — do you think M. Desrivières has not been kind to you? "

— "There are good *békés,* Youma; — there are masters who are better masters than others: there is no good master! "

— "Oh, Gabriel! — and M. Desrivières? "

— "Do you believe slavery is a good thing, — a right thing, Youma? "

She could not answer him directly. The ethical question of slavery had first been brought to her mind in a vague way by her recent disappointment; — previously the subject would have seemed to her one of those into which it was not quite proper to inquire doubtingly.

— "I think it is wicked to be cruel to slaves," she replied. . . . "But since the good God arranged it so that there should be slaves and masters, doudoux. . . ."

— "*Ou trop sott! — ou trop enfant!* " — he cried out, and held his peace; feeling that it were vain to argue with her, — that what he called her folly and her childishness separated them far more than the will of a mistress. Her idea of duty to her godmother, of duty to the child, appeared to be mingled in some way with her idea of religion, — to which the least light allusion would provoke her anger. He could comprehend it only as a sort of mental weakness created by béké-teaching. To his own thinking, slavery was a kind of trickery, — the duping of blacks by whites; and it was simply because they could not dupe him, that they had given him a position entailing no physical labor, and in which he could feel himself more free than others. He did not feel grateful therefor: it seemed to him that no possible kindnesses, no imaginable indulgences on the part of a master could deserve the voluntary sacrifice of a chance for liberty by the slave. Though really possessing a rude intelligence above his comrades, Gabriel shared many savage traits of his race, — traits that three hundred years of colonial servitude could hardly modify: among others, the hatred of all constraint, — reasonable or unreasonable. Still the Creole *bitaco* prefers hungry liberty to any comfort obtainable by hired labor; — his refusal to work for wages necessitated the importation of coolies, yet he can do the work of three; — he is capable of prodigious physical effort; he will carry on his head twenty miles to town a load of vegetables of his own weight, or twenty-four bread-fruits; he will cutlass his way through forests to the very summit of peaks to find particular herbs and cabbage-palm for the market; he will do anything extraordinary to avoid being under orders,

— martyrize his body by herculean efforts to escape control. . . . This spirit in Gabriel had been temporarily softened by the profits and petty dignity of his position, — by the ambition of being one day able to settle on his own land in some wild place, and live independent of everybody; — but not the least of the reasons which made him valuable at Anse-Marine was his confidence of being able to escape when he pleased. . . . And, nevertheless, judging Youma by himself, the very motive she had urged for her refusal seemed to him the one of all others he could not reason with her against, because he coupled it with his own ideas of the supernatural, — likened it to certain dark superstitions of which he knew the extraordinary power. Through her kindheartedness, the *békés* had been able to impose upon her mind; — and tenderness of heart, except to him and for him alone, he deemed childish and foolish. . . . "*C'est bon khè crabe qui lacause y pa ni tête,*" says the negro proverb. — (It is because of the crab's good heart that he lacks a head.)

Nevertheless he himself had a heart, — though a rough one; — and it was moved by the sight of Youma's silent tears which his anger and his reproaches had caused. He loved her well in his hard way; and all his tenacity of will set itself against the losing of her. She had denied his wish; and he knew her strength of resolve, — yet with time he might find another way to make her his own. Something would depend on herself, — on such influence as she might have with her mistress; but he relied more upon the probability of a social change. Hopeless as he had pictured the future for Youma, he was far from believing it hopeless. Echoes of the words and work of philanthropists had reached him: he knew how and why the English slaves had received their freedom; — he knew also something of which he could not speak, even in a whisper, to Youma. . . . From plantation to plantation there had passed a secret message, — framed in African speech for the ears of those chosen to know and fearless to do; — already, even within the remotest valleys of the colony, hearts had been strangely stirred by the blowing of the great wind of Emancipation. . . .

— "Doudoux-moin!" he suddenly entreated, in a tone of tenderness such as she had never heard him use, — "*pa pleiré conm, ça, chè, — non!*" And she felt him drawing her close in a contrite caress. . . . "It was not with you, little heart, that I was angry! — listen: there are things you do not know, child; but I believe you — you are doing what you think is right. . . . *Pa pleiré, — non! — ti bigioule moin!* . . . Listen: since you will not come, I will not go; — I will stay here at Anse-Marine. . . . *Pa pleiré, doudoux!*"

A little while she sobbed in his embrace without replying; then she murmured: —

— "I shall be more happy, doudoux, to know that you do not go. . . . But it is not a time to be angry, dear, when we must say good-bye for always."

— " Ah! my little wasp! will you let them choose another husband for you, when they have you back in Saint Pierre? " he asked, with a smile of confidence.

— " Gabriel! " she cried, passionately, — " they can never do that! . . . If they will not let me have you, doudoux, I will remain forever as I am. . . . No! — they cannot do that! "

— " *Bon, ti khèmoin!* — then it is not good-bye for always. . . . Wait! "

She looked up, wondering. . . . But in the same moment, Mayotte, tired of playing with her cocoa-nut, and seeing Gabriel, ran to them screaming, " Gabou! — Gabou! " — and clung delightedly to the commandeur's knee.

" No! — go and play a little while longer," said Youma. " Gabou is too tired to be pulled about."

" Are you, Gabou? " asked Mayotte straining her little head back to look up to his face. And without waiting for his answer, she went on to tell him: — " Oh! Gabou! we are going back to town with *papoute!* "

" He knows that," said Youma; " go and play."

" But, da, I am tired! " she answered discontentedly, still clinging to Gabriel's knee, expecting him to toss her up in his arms. . . . " *Pouend moin!* " she coaxed, — " take me up! — take me up! "

" *Pauv piti, màgré, ça!* " exclaimed Gabriel, lifting her to the level of his great bronze face, — " you do not care one bit that you are going to leave Gabou and all your dear friends at Anse-Marine, — *piess, piess, piti mechante!* — you do not love Gabou! "

" Yes, I do! " she cooed, patting his dark cheeks, — " I do love you, Gabou! "

" *Allé! — ti souyè!* — you love Gabou to play with you: that is all! And Gabou has no time to play with you now; — Gabou must go and see what everybody is doing, before it is time to sound the *cònelambi.* . . . *Bo!* — *Adié, cocotte.*"

He placed her in her nurse's arms, and kissed Youma also, — but on the forehead only, as he had seen M. Desrivières do . . . because of the child. . . . " *Adié, ti khè!* "

" *Pou toujou?* " she murmured, almost inaudibly, vainly struggling with the emotion which stifled her voice, — " for always? "

— " *Ah! non, chè!* " he answered, smiling to give her hope. . . . " *Mône pa k'encontré; — moune k'encontré toujou.*"

(Only the mornes never meet; — folk always meet again.)

X

. . . Would she ever see him again? she asked herself unceasingly through all her wakefulness of that night, — her last save one at Anse-Marine. But always came the self-answer of tears. . . . She heard the

number of the hour at which she might have fled with him to freedom, and hour after hour, tinkled out by the little bronze salon timepiece through its vaulted glass. She closed her eyes, — and still, as through their shut lids, saw the images of the evening: the figure of Gabriel, and Mayotte playing with her cocoa-nut, and the velvet shadowing of the black cliffs on the black sand, and a white sheeting and leaping of surf, — silent like breakings of cloud. They went and came, — distorted and vanished and returned again with startling vividness, as if they would never fade utterly away. Only in the first hours of the morning there began for her that still soft darkness which is rest from thought.

But again a little while, and her mind wakened to the fancy of a voice calling her name, — faintly, as from a great distance, — a voice remembered as in a dream one holds remembrance of dreams gone before.

Then she became aware of a face, — the face of a beautiful brown woman looking at her with black soft eyes, — smiling under the yellow folds of a *madras* turban, — and lighted by a light that came from nowhere, — that was only a memory of some long-dead morning. And through the dimness round about it a soft blue radiance grew, — the ghost of a day; and she knew the face and murmured to it: — "*Doudoux-manman.*" . . .

. . . They two were walking somewhere she had been long ago, — somewhere among mornes: she felt the guiding of her mother's hand as when a child.

And before them as they went, something purple and vague and vast rose and spread, — the enormous spectre of the sea, rounding to the sky. And in the pearliness over its filmy verge there loomed again the vision of the English island, with long shreddings of luminous cloud across its violet peaks. . . . Slowly it brightened and slowly changed its color as she gazed; and all the peaks flushed crimson to their tips, — like a budding of wondrous roses from sea to sun. . . .

And Douceline, softly speaking, as to an infant, said: —

— "*Travail Bon-Dié toutt joli, anh?*" — (Is it not all-pretty, the work of the good God?)

— "Oh! my little jewel-mamma, — *ti-bijou-manman!* — oh! my little-heart-mamma, — *ti-khè-manman!* . . . I must not go!" . . .

. . . But Douceline was no longer with her, — and the shining shadow of the island had also passed away, — and she heard the voice of Mayotte crying . . . somewhere behind trees.

And she hastened there, and found her, under some huge growth that spread out coiling roots far and wide: one could not discern what tree it was for the streaming weight of lianas upon it. The child had plucked a combre leaf, and was afraid, — something so strange had trickled upon her fingers.

— "It is only the blood-liana," said Youma: "they dye with it." . . .

— "But it is warm," said the child, — still full of fear. . . . Then both

became afraid because of a heavy pulsing sound, dull as the last flappings of a cannon-echo among the mornes. The earth shook with it. And the light began to fail, — dimmed into a red gloom, as when the sun dies.

— " It is the tree! " gasped Mayotte, — *" the heart of a tree! "*

But they could not go: a weird numbness weighed their feet to the ground.

And suddenly the roots of the tree bestirred with frightful life, and reached out writhing to wrap about them; — and the black gloom of branches above them became a monstrous swarming; — and the ends of the roots and the ends of the limbs had eyes. . . .

. . . And through the ever-deepening darkness came the voice of Gabriel, crying, — *" It is a Zombi! — I cannot cut it! "*

XI

The season of heavy humid heat and torrential rains, — the long *hivernage,* — had passed with its storms; — and the season of north-east winds, when the heights grow cool; — and the season of dryness, when the peaks throw off their wrappings of cloud. It was the *renouveau,* the most delicious period of the year, — that magical spring-time of the tropics, when the land suddenly steeps itself in iridescent vapor, and all distances become jewel-tinted, while nature renews her saps after the bleaching and withering of the dry months, and rekindles all her colors. The forests covered themselves at once with fruit and flowers; the shrivelled lianas revived their luminous green, put forth new million tendrils, and over the heights of the *grands bois* poured down cataracts of blue, white, pink, and yellow blossom. The palmistes and the angelins appeared to grow suddenly taller as they shook off their dead plumes; — an aureate haze hung over the valleys of ripe cane; — and mountain roads began to turn green almost to their middle under the immense invasion of new-born grasses, herbs, and little bushes. . . . Mosses and lichens sprouted everywhere upon surfaces of stone or timber unprotected by paint; — grasses shot up through the jointing of basaltic pavements; and, simultaneously, tough bright plants burst into life from all the crevices of walls and roofs, attacking even the solid masonry of fortifications, compelling man to protect his work. An infinite variety: ferns and capillaria and vines that sink their tendrils into the hardest rock; — the *thé-miraille,* and the *mousse-miraille;* the *pourpier* and the wild guava; the *fleuri-Noël,* the Devil's tobacco (*tabac-diabe*), and the *lakhératt;* — even little trees, that must be removed at once for the safety of dwellings, — such as the young *fromager* or silk-cotton, — rose from wall tops and roofs, — branching from the points of gables, — rooting upon ridges and cornices. . . . The enormous cone of Pelée, which through the weeks of north winds had outlined the cusps of its cratered head against the blue light, once more drew down the clouds about it, and

changed the tawny tone of its wrinkled slopes to lush green. Soft thunders rolled among the hills; tepid dashes of rain refreshed the earth at intervals; — the air grew sweet with balsamic scents; — the color of the sky itself deepened.

But though the land might put forth all its bewitchment, the hearts of the colonists were heavy. For the first time in many years the magnificent crop was being gathered with difficulty: there were mills silent for the want of arms to feed them. For the first time in centuries the slave might refuse to obey, and the master fear to punish. The Republic had been proclaimed; and the promise of emancipation had aroused in the simple minds of the negroes a ferment of fantastic ideas, — free gifts of plantations, — free donations of wealth, — perpetual repose unearned, — paradise life for all. They had seen the common result of freedom accorded for services exceptional; — they were familiar with the life of the free classes; — but such evidence had small value for them: the liberty given by the *béké* resembled in nothing that peculiar quality of liberty to be accorded by the Republic!

They had dangerous advisers, unfortunately, to nourish such imaginings: men of color who foresaw in the coming social transformation larger political opportunities. The situation had totally changed since the time when slaves and freedmen fought alike on the side of the planters against Rochambeau and republicanism, against the *bourgeoisie* and the *patriotes*. The English capture of the island had justified that distrust of the first Revolution shown by the *hommes de couleur*, and had preserved the old régime for another half-century. But during that half-century the free class of color had obtained all the privileges previously refused it by prejudice or by caution; and the interests of the *gens de couleur* had ceased to be inseparably identified with those of the whites. They had won all that was possible to win by the coalition; and they now knew the institution of slavery doomed beyond hope, not by the mere fiat of a convention, but by the opinion of the nineteenth century. And the promise of universal suffrage had been given. There were scarcely twelve thousand whites; — there were one hundred and fifty thousand blacks and half-breeds.

Yet there was nothing in the aspect or attitude of the slave population which could fully have explained to a stranger the alarm of the whites. The subject race had not only been physically refined by those extraordinary influences of climate and environment which produce the phenomena of creolization; but the more pleasing characteristics of the original savage nature, — its emotional artlessness, its joyousness, its kindliness, its quickness to sympathy, its capacity to find pleasure in trifles, — had been cultivated and intensified by slavery. The very speech of the population, — the curious patois shaped in the mould of a forgotten African tongue, and liquefied with fulness of long vowel sounds, — caressed the ear like the cooing of pigeons. . . . Even to-day the stranger may find in the gentler traits of this exotic humanity an indescribable charm, — despite all those

changes of character wrought by the vastly increased difficulties of life under the new conditions. Only the Creole knows by experience the darker possibilities of the same semi-savage nature: its sudden capacities of cruelty, — its blind exaltations of rage, — its stampede-furies of destruction. . . . Before the official announcement of political events reached the colony, the negroes, — through some unknown system of communication swifter than government vessels, — knew their prospects, knew what was being done for them, felt themselves free. A prompt solution of the slavery question was more than desirable; — delay was becoming dangerous. There were as yet no hostile manifestations; — but the slave-owners, — knowing the history of those sudden uprisings which revealed an unsuspected power of organization and a marvellous art of secrecy, — felt the air full of menace, and generally adopted a policy of caution and forbearance. But in a class accustomed to command there will always be found men whose anger makes light of prudence, and whose resolve challenges all consequences. Such a one among the planters of 1848 dared to assert his rights even on the eve of emancipation; — chastised with his own hand the slave who refused to work, and sent him to the city prison to await the judgment of a law that might at any moment become obsolete.

His rashness precipitated the storm. The *travailleurs* began to leave the plantations, and to mass in armed bands upon the heights overlooking Saint Pierre. The populace of the city rose in riot, burst into the cutlass stores and seized the weapons, surrounded the jail and demanded the release of the prisoner. . . . *"Si ou pa lagué y, ké ouè! — nou ké fai toutt nègue'bitation descenne!"* That terrible menace first revealed the secret understanding between the slaves of the port and the blacks of the plantation; — the officers of the law recoiled before the threat, and turned their prisoner loose.

But the long-suppressed passion of the subject class was not appeased: the mob continued to parade the streets, uttering cries never heard before, — *"Mort aux blancs! — Ā bas les békés!"* . . . feeling secured from military interference by the recognized cowardice of a republican governor. Evening found the riot still unquelled, — the whites imprisoned in their residences, or fleeing for refuge to the ships in the harbor. And those dwelling on the hills, keeping watch, heard all through the night the rallying *ouklé* of negroes striding by, armed with cutlasses and bamboo pikes and bottles filled with sand. Twenty-four hours later, the whole slave-population of the island was in revolt; and the towns were threatened with a general descent of the *travailleurs*.

XII

Another day found the situation still more sinister. All business was suspended; every store and warehouse closed; even the markets remained

empty; the bakeries had been pillaged, and provisions had become almost unobtainable. A rumor was abroad that emancipation had been voted, — that the news was being concealed, — that the official proclamation of freedom could only be enforced by an appeal to arms. . . .

Prior to the outbreak there had been a fierce heat of political excitement, created by the republican election. The white slave-holders had voted for a freedman faithful to their interests; the men of color had used their freshly acquired privileges to secure representation in the person of a noted French abolitionist. Pictures of him had been distributed by thousands, together with republican cockades and tiny tricolored flags: the people kissed the pictures with tears of enthusiasm and shouts of *" Vive papa! "* — the colored children waved the little flags and cried: *" Vive la République! "* — some were so young they could only cry, *" Vive la 'Ipipi! "* And the complete victory of the *hommes de couleur* only intensified the exaltation. . . . But after the affair of the jail, the children ceased to appear in the streets with their little flags; and there was no longer a distribution of cockades, but a distribution of cutlasses — new cutlasses, for they had to be sharpened, and all the grindstones were in requisition.

. . . It became more and more perilous for the whites to show themselves in the streets. They watched for chances to get to the ships, under the protection of their own slaves or of loyal freedmen, having influence with the populace, knowing every dark face in it. But after mid-day such faithful servants began to find their devotion unavailing: strange negroes were mingling with the rioters, — savage-looking men, whom the city domestics had never seen before, and who replied to the assurance *" C'est yon bon béké "* (this is a *good* white) only by abuse or violence. Armed bands incessantly paraded, — beating drums, — chanting, — shouting *" À bas les békés! "* — watching for a fugitive to challenge with the phrase, — *" Eh! citoyen . . . citoyenne . . . arrête! Je te parle! "* — affecting French speech for the pleasure of the insulting *tutoiement*. They peered for white faces at windows, cursed them, clamored: *" Mi! ausouè-à ké debrayé ou! "* — gesturing with knives as if opening fish. Some great aggressive movement seemed to be preparing; and the *travailleurs* were always massing upon the heights. The whites who could not flee, feeling their lives in danger, — tried to prepare for defence: in some houses the women and girls made ball-cartridges. Slaves betrayed these preparations; and a rumor circulated that the békés were secretly organizing to attack the mob. . . . The time was long past when the whites could suppress a riot, and hang men of color to the mango-trees of the Batterie d'Esnotz; but what they had done in other days was remembered against them.

It was in the Quarter of the Fort, — the most ancient part of the city, situated on an eminence, and isolated by the Rivière Roxelane, — that the white Creoles found themselves least safe from attack. It was especially difficult for them to reach the ships: the bridges and all approaches to the

shore being crowded with armed negroes. The greater number of the houses were small, and could offer little protection if besieged; — and many persons preferred to leave their own homes and seek asylum in the few large dwellings of the district. Among such were the Desrivières family, who found refuge with their relatives the De Kersaints. The De Kersaint residence was unusually roomy, — not more than two full stories high, but long, broad, and built with the solidity of a stronghold. It stood at the verge of the old quarter, in a steeply sloping street, descending westward so as to leave a great half-disk of sea visible above the roofs, and ascending eastward to join a country road leading to the interior. The windows of the rear overlooked vast cane-fields, extending far up the flanks of the Montagne Pelée, whose clouded crest towered fifteen miles away.

There were more than thirty persons assembled for safety at the De Kersaints' — mostly wives and daughters of relatives; and there was serious alarm among these. In the forenoon the servants had deserted the house, — one of them, a negress, irritated by some reproach, had left with the threat: "*Ausouè ou ké ouè — attenne!*" (Wait! you will see tonight!) M. de Kersaint, an old gentleman of seventy, who, seconded by his son, had made the fugitives as comfortable as was possible, strove to calm their fears. He believed the night would bring nothing worse than a great increase of noise and menace: he did not think the leaders of the city populace intended more than intimidation. There might be a general descent of the plantation hands, — that would be a graver danger; but there were five hundred troops in the neighboring barracks. No criminal violence had yet occurred in the quarter: it was reported that a gentleman had been killed in the other end of the city, — but there were so many wild reports!

. . . As a fact, the whites of the Fort, — mostly deserted by their slaves and domestics, — knew little of what was going on even in their immediate vicinity. Things that for two hundred years had been done in darkness and secrecy were now being done openly in the light. An occult power had suddenly assumed unquestioned sway, — the power of the African sorcerer.

Under the tamarinds of the Place du Fort, a *quimboiseur* plied his ghastly calling, — selling amulets, selling fetiches, selling magical ointments made of the grease of serpents. Before him stood an open cask filled with *tafia* mingled with gunpowder and thickened with bodies of crushed wasps. About him crowded the black men of the port, — the half-nude *gabarriers,* wont to wield oars twenty-five feet long; — the herculean *nèguegouôs-bois,* brutalized by the labor of paddling their massive and awkward craft; — tough *canotiers,* whose skins of bronze scarcely bead in the hottest summer sun; — the crews of the *yôles* and the *sabas* and the gommiers; — the men of the cooperies, and the cask rollers, and the stowers; — and the fishers of *tonne,* — and the fishers of sharks. "*Ça qui lè?*" shouted the quimboiseur, serving out the venom in cups of tin, — "*Ça qui lè vini bouè y?* . . . Who will drink it, the Soul of a Man? — the

Spirit of Combat? — the Essence of Falling to Rise? — the Heart-Mover? — the Hell-Breaker? " . . . And they clamored for it, swallowed it — the wasps and the gunpowder and the alcohol, — drinking themselves into madness.

. . . Sunset yellowed the sky, — filled the horizon with flare of gold; — the sea changed its blue to lilac; — the mornes brightened their vivid green to a tone so luminous that they seemed turning phosphorescent. Rapidly the glow crimsoned, — shadows purpled; and night spread swiftly from the east, — black-violet and full of stars.

Even as the last vermilion light began to fade, there sounded from the Place du Fort a long, weird, hollow call, that echoed sobbingly through all the hills like an enormous moan. Then another, — from the Mouillage; — another, — from the river-mouth; — and others, interblending, from the *pirogues* and the *gabarres* and the *sabas* of the harbor: the blowing of a hundred lambi-shells, — the negroes of the city calling to their brethren of the hills. . . . So still, the fishers of sharks, from the black coast of Prêcheur, call the *travailleurs* of the heights to descend and divide the flesh.

And other moaning signals responded faintly, — from the valley of the Roxelane and the terraces of Perrinelle, — from the Morne d'Orange and the Morne Mirail and the Morne Labelle: the *travailleurs* were coming! . . . And from the market-place, where by lantern-light the sorcerer still gave out his *léssence-brisé-lenfè*, and his amulets and grease of serpents, began to reverberate ominously the heavy pattering of a *tamtam*.

Barricaded within their homes, the whites of the lower city could hear the tumult of the gathering. . . . Masters and slaves alike were haunted by a dream of blood and fire. — the memory of Hayti.

XIII

At the De Kersaints' all the apartments of the upper floor had been given up to the fugitives, except one front room where the men remained on watch: many of the women and young girls preferred to sit up with them rather than seek repose. Down-stairs all the windows and doors had been securely closed; and it was decided to extinguish all lights during the passing of a mob. Then was converse on the events of the preceding day, the late election, prospects of emancipation, the history of former uprisings, — some of which the older men remembered well, — and on the character of negroes. This topic brought out a series of anecdotes, — some sinister, but mostly droll. A planter in the little assembly related a story about one of his own slaves who had saved enough money to buy a cow. At the first announcement of the political change in France he took the cow out of the field and tied it to the porch of his master's house. " *Pouki ou marré vache lanmaison?* " (Why do you tie the cow to the house?) asked the

planter. . . . "*Moin ka marré vache lanmaison, maître, pace yo ka proclamé la repiblique — pisse you fois repiblique-à proclamé, zaffai ta yon c'est ta toutt*" (Master, I tie the cow to the house because they proclaim the Republic, — for once that thè Republic is proclaimed, the belongings of one are the belongings of everybody). In spite of the general anxiety, this narrative provoked laughter. Then, the conversation taking another turn, M. Desrivières told the story of Youma and the serpent, — there being many present who had not heard of the incident before. The young capresse, who sat with Mayotte on her knees, arose with the child, and left the apartment before M. Desrivières had ended his recital. A few minutes later he followed her into the adjoining room, called her away from the little one, and said to her, in an undertone which could not reach the child's ears: —

— "Youma, my daughter, the street is very quiet now; and I think it will be better for you to leave the child with my mother, and pass the night with our colored neighbors. . . . I can open the door for you."

— "Why, master?" . . . She had never asked him why before.

— "*Mafi,*" he answered, with a caress in his eyes, "I cannot ask you to stay with us to-night. There is danger for all of us," he added, sinking his voice to a whisper: "we may be attacked."

— "That is why I wish to stay, master." . . . This time she spoke aloud and firmly.

— "Oh! papa!" cried Mayotte, coming between them, — "do not send her anywhere! — I want her to tell me stories!"

— "Little egotist!" said M. Desrivières, stooping to kiss her, — "and if Youma wishes to go?" . . .

— "You do not, — do you, *da?*" asked the child in surprise. She imagined herself at a sort of evening pleasure party.

— "I will stay to tell you stories," said Youma. . . . M. Desrivières pressed her hand, and left her with the child.

. . . As M. Desrivières announced, the street had become very quiet. It was one of the most retired: during the day there had been no gatherings in it; — some bands of negroes had passed from time to time shouting "*A bas les békés!*" — but since nightfall the disorderly element had disappeared. White citizens ventured to open their windows and look abroad. They heard the blowing of the lambi-shells without guessing its meaning, — imagined some fresh excitement in the direction of the harbor. Nevertheless, all became more anxious. The rushing of the water along the steep gutters, — the mountain water purifying every street, — seemed to sound unusually loud.

— "It always makes a great noise in this street," said M. de Kersaint, — "there is so much incline."

— "I think we are all more or less nervous to-night," said another gentleman.

But Youma, suddenly returning alone to the room where the men conversed, pointed to the windows, and exclaimed: —

— " It is not the water! "

The ears of the half-breed have a singular keenness to sounds. . . . All talk ceased: the men held their breath to listen.

XIV

A HEAVY murmur, as of far surf, filled the street, — slowly loudened, — became a dull unbroken roar. From the heights it seemed to approach, and with it a glow, as of conflagration. . . . At once in every house the lights were extinguished, the windows closed, the doors secured; — the street became desolate as a cemetery. But from behind the slatted shutters of upper rooms all could watch the brightening of the light, hear the coming of the roar. . . .

— " *Yo ka vini!* " cried Youma.

And into the high street suddenly burst a storm of clamorings, a blaze of torch fires, — as a dense mass of black men in canvas trousers, hundreds naked to the waist, came moving at a run: the downpour of the *travailleurs*. Under the shock of their bare feet the dwellings trembled: — through all the walls a vibration passed, as of a faint earthquake. . . . If they would only go by!

Hundreds had already passed; and still the rushing vision seemed without end, the cascading of great straw hats interminable; — and over the torrent of it the steel of pikes and plantation forks and brandished cutlasses flickered in the dancing of torch fires. But there came an unexpected halt, — a struggling and shouldering, a stifling pressure, — a half lull in the tempest of shouting; while the street filled with a sinister odor of alcohol, — a stench of *tafia*. Evidently the mob was drunk, and being so, doubly dangerous. . . . Some one had given an order, which nobody could fully hear; a stentorian voice repeated it, as the tumult subsided: " *Là! — làmênm! — caïe béké!* " All the black faces turned to the dwelling of the De Kersaints; and all the black throats roared again. Unfortunately the imposing front of the building, — the only two-story edifice in a street of cottages, — had signalled out its proprietors as rich békés. To be a béké, a white, and to be rich, was in the belief of the simple *travailleur* at least, to be an aristocrat, an enemy of emancipation, — most likely a slave-holder. . . . " *Fouillé là!* " the same immense voice pealed — (Search there!); — and the whole house shook to a furious knocking at the main entrance, of which the massive double doors were secured by an iron bar, as well as by lock and bolt. " *Ouvé! — ouvé ba nou!* " (Open for us) shouted the crowd.

M. de Kersaint unfastened a shutter of one of the upper front rooms, and looked down upon the mob. It was an appalling mob; — there were nightmare-faces in it. Most of the visages were unfamiliar; but some he could

recognize — faces of the port: many of the roughest city class had joined the *travailleurs* before their descent. There were women also in the mob, — gesticulating, screaming: some were plantation negresses; others were not, — and these were the worst. . . .

— "*Ça oulé, méfi?*" asked M. de Kersaint.

The first time they could not hear him for the uproar; but it soon calmed at the sight of the white-haired béké at the window: everybody wanted to listen. M. de Kersaint was not seriously alarmed; — he did not believe the crowd could dare more than a brutal manifestation, — what in the patois is termed a *voum*. He repeated in Creole: —

— "What do you want, my sons?" . . . It was thus the béké addressed the slave; — in his lips the word *monfi* had an almost patriarchal meaning of affection and protection: its use survives even in these republican years. But as uttered in that moment by M. de Kersaint, it fell upon the political passion of the mob like oil on fire.

— "*Ou sé pè-nou, anh?*" — laughed a mocker: "Are you our father? . . . There are no more 'my sons': there are only citizens, — *anni cittoyen!*"

— "*Y trop souyé! — y trop malin!*" screamed a woman's voice. "He wants to flatter us, the old béké! — he is too sly!"

— "*Cittoyens, pouloss,*" responded M. de Kersaint. "Why do you want to break into my house? Have I ever done harm to any of you?"

— "You have arms in the house!" answered the same menacing voice that had first directed the attention of the populace to the dwelling. It rang from the chest of a very tall negro, who seemed to be the leader of the riot: he wore only a straw hat and cotton trousers, and carried a cutlass. All at once M. de Kersaint remembered having seen him before, — working on the plantation of Fond-Laillet, as commandeur.

— "Sylvain, my son," answered M. de Kersaint, "we have no arms here. But we have women and children here. We have nothing to do with your wrongs."

— "*Ouvé ba nou!*"

— "None of you have any right to enter my house."

— "*Ouvé ba nou!*"

— "You have no right." . . .

— "Ah! we will take the right," shouted the leader; and a general roar went up, — thousands of excited voices reiterating the demand, "*Ouvé ba nou!*"

The white head withdrew from the window, and a young face appeared at it, — dark, handsome, and resolute; — the head of the younger De Kersaint.

— "*Tas de charognes!*" shouted the young man, — "yes, we have arms; and we know how to use them! The first one of you who enters this house, I shall make his black brains leap!"

He had a single loaded pistol: there was not another weapon in the building. He counted on the cowardice of the mob. But the negroes knew, or thought they knew, the truth: the old béké had not lied to them; — they were not afraid.

— "*Bon! nou ké ouè!*" menaced the leader. . . . "*Ennou!*" he cried, turning to the crowd, "*crazé caïe-là!*" Almost in the same instant, a stone shot by some powerful hand whirred by the head of the younger De Kersaint, and crashed into the furniture of the apartment. Vainly the shutters were bolted: a second missile dashed them open again; — a third shivered those of the next window. Stone followed stone. There were several persons severely injured; — a lady was stricken senseless; — a gentleman's shoulder fractured. And the cry of the crowd was for more stones — "*Ba nou ouôches! — ba ouôches!*" — because the central pavement before the house was a rough cement, affording scanty material for missiles. But the lower cross-street was paved with rounded rocks from the river-bed; — a line of negresses formed from the point of attack to the corner at the cry of "*Fai lachaîne!*" — and the disjointed pavement was passed up along the line by apronfuls. There was perfect order in this system of supplying projectiles: the black women had been trained for generations to "make the chain" when transporting stone from the torrents to the site of a building, or the place of a protection-wall.

Then the stone shower became terrific, — pulverizing furniture, bursting partitions, shattering chamber doors. . . . How the Creole negro can fling a stone may be comprehended only by those who have seen him, on mountain roads, bring down fruit from trees growing at inaccessible heights. . . . All the shutters of the upper front rooms had already ceased to exist; — the inmates had sought refuge in the rear apartments. But the shutters of the windows of the ground-floor, being very heavy, solid, and partly protected with iron, continued to resist; and the doors of the great arch-way defied the brawny pressure of all the shoulders pushed against them.

— "*Méné pié-bois içi! — pié-bois! — pié-bois!*" cried the men, straining to burst the doors, under cover of the bombardment; and the cry passed up the street toward the mountain slope. . . . From within the house it was no longer possible to observe what the mob were doing; — the windows were unapproachable. But such a shout suddenly made itself heard from the street that it was evident something new had occurred. . . . "Ah! the soldiers!" exclaimed Madame de Kersaint.

She was mistaken. The fresh excitement had been caused by the appearance of the *pié-bois*, — a weighty log carried by a crew of twenty men, — all crying "*Ba lai! — ba lai!*" Then those pushing at the doors fell back to give the battering-ram full play.

The men chanted as they swung it. . . . "*Soh-soh! — yaïe-yah! Rhâlé fò!*" And all the house shook to the enormous blow.

— "*Soh-soh! — yaïe-yah! Rhâlé fò!*" Bolts and locks burst; — the

framework itself loosened in a showering of mortar; — the broad iron bar within still held, but it had bent like a bow, and the doors had yielded fully five inches.

— *"Soh-soh! — yaïe-yah! Rhâlé fò!"* A clang of broken metal; an explosion of splintered timber, — and the doors were down. The arch-way rang out the clap of their fall like a cannon-shot; the log-bearers dropped their log; — a brute roar of exultation acclaimed the feat. . . . Within, all was black.

There was a moment's hesitation; — the darkness and the voidness intimidated. *"Pòté flambeau vini!"* shouted the chief to the torch-bearers, reaching for a light . . . *"ba moin! ba moin!"* He snatched one, and leaped forward, brandishing his weapon in the other hand. But precisely as he passed the threshold, a stunning report pealed through the arch-way; and the tall negro staggered, dropping torch and cutlass, — flung up both naked arms, reeled half round, and fell on his back, dead. The younger De Kersaint had kept his word.

The negroes at the entrance would have turned back in panic; but the pressure from behind, the rush of blind fury, was resistless; and the van of the populace was hurled into the arch-way, — struggling, howling, striking, stumbling over the corpse and the broken doors, — and with such an impetus that many fell. . . . The younger De Kersaint had not thought of retreat, even when the gentlemen who had descended with him, finding resistance hopeless, were remounting to the upper rooms: he still stood at the foot of the stairs with his empty pistol, — believing himself able to hold back the invasion, to terrorize by moral force. But terror may become a blind rage, even in the slave, — when made desperate by the necessity of confronting a pistol muzzle; and the blacks flung themselves on the young man with the very fury of fear. He had time only to dash his useless weapon in the face of the foremost, as a bayonet fastened to a pole passed through his body: then he sank without one cry under such a mad slashing of cutlasses that strikers wounded each other in their frenzy. . . . Simultaneously a double-barrelled gun, loaded with ball, was fired from the entrance at those reascending the stair-way, — both barrels together, — and M. Desrivières fell. He expired almost instantly, before his comrades could drag him into a room, of which the doors were at once barricaded with all the heavy furniture available; — the entire charge had entered his back, shattering the spine.

. . . Then, after the momentary panic, came the reaction of hate, the mob thirst of vengeance; — traditional hate of the white intensified by the passions of the hour; vengeance for the fear inspired, for the killing of their leader, for all fancied or remembered wrongs. But the apartments of the ground-floor were empty: the békés had retreated to the upper rooms, whither it might be dangerous to pursue them; — perhaps they had arms

in reserve for the last extremity. It was at all events certain they could not escape. The windows of the rear were high, and looked down upon a plantation road skirting cane-fields, where armed blacks were on the watch; and the side walls were solid masonry without a single opening. Neither was escape possible by way of the roof, — elevated fully twenty feet above the tiles of adjoining cottages; — the békés were helpless! . . . But no one now offered to lead the assault. There were only clamorings, — hideous threats, — utterances that seemed the conception of cannibals in delirium. . . . Meanwhile the body of the dead leader, raised upon a broken door for a litter, was being paraded through the streets by torch-light: armed men ran beside the corpse, pointing to the pink brain oozing from the wound, and crying: — *" Mi! — yo k'assassiné nou! yo ka tchoué fouè nou! "* . . . The excitement became maniacal; but one voice, — a woman's, the voice of the wife of dead Sylvain, shrieked clearly through it all: —

— *" Metté dijé, zautt! — brilé toutt béké! "*

And the mob caught up the cry, — stormed it through the street. *" Dijé! — metté dijé! "* . . . But what if the békés should make a desperate rush upon the incendiaries? . . . *" Oté lescalié! "* some one suggested, and settled all hesitations. There were arms enough to tear down any stair-way in five minutes: it took less time for the rioters to obey the suggestion. They pulled away the stairs; — they smashed the wreck into kindling-wood, piled it on the tiles of the hall-way, and fired it with torches. The balustrade was of mahogany, but the steps were *bois du nord,* — yellow pine, resinous and light. . . . *" Ka pleine gomme! — ka brilé bien! "* . . . Simultaneously the furniture of the lower rooms was demolished; — everything they contained was heaped upon the fire, — combustible or incombustible: portraits, curtains, *verrines,* bronzes, mats, mirrors, hangings. . . . *" Sacré tonnè, nou ké brilé toutt! — Ké ouè! "* . . . There were sounds of affright overhead, — of feet wildly running, — of furniture being dragged away from doors; — there were shrieks. . . . *" Ouaill! —* not so brave now, the cursed békés! " . . . Then faces appeared through the smoke, looking down, — a gray-haired lady, striving to be heard, to speak to some heart; — a young mother dumbly pointing to her infant. Two black arms reached up toward her in savage mockery, and a negress hoarsely screamed: *" Ba moin li! — moin sé vlopé enlai y conm chatrou! "* — miming the cuttle-fish devouring its prey! A burst of obscene laughter followed the infamous jest. . . . But the heat and smoke became unendurable; — the incendiaries retreated, — mostly to the street, — a few to the cane-fields in the rear, to watch for any possible attempts at escape. There was no more stone-throwing: the flingers were weary; and the mob was content to watch the progress of its vengeance. The shrieks could still be heard: they were answered by gibes and curses.

The arch-way reddened, — lighted, — began to glow like a furnace,

forcing by its heat a general falling back from the entrance. . . . And soon the crackling within became a low roar, like the sound of a torrent; — all the *rez-de-chaussée* was seized by the flame. It put long yellow tongues through the windows; — they serpentined about the masonry, licked the key-stones and the wall above them, — striving to climb; — began to devour the framework of the shutters. . . . And, at intervals, from street to street, sounded the sinister melancholy blowing of the great sea-shells.

Over all the roofs of the city the voice of an immense bell began to peal, — rapidly, continuously: the *bourdon* of the cathedral was tolling the tocsin. One after another the bells of the lesser churches joined in the alarm. But, for the first time, the pumps remained in their station-houses; — the black firemen ignored the summons! And still the soldiers, — though muttering mutiny, — were rigidly confined to their barracks by superior order. Yet the Governor knew the city was at the mercy of a negro mob, — knew the white population in peril of massacre. The order seemed incredible to those who read it with their eyes; — it remains one of the stupefying facts of French colonial history, — one of the many, not of the few, which appear to justify the white Creole's undying hate of Republicanism.

. . . Fanned by a south breeze, the flames assailed the rear more rapidly than the front rooms of the besieged dwelling, — destroying communication between them by devouring the lobbies connected with the wrecked end of the stair-way. And, through the outpouring of smoke, men began to drop or leap from back windows, — abandoning the women and children, — goaded by the swift menace of the hideous death of fire. On the side of the street there could have been no hope; — on that of the fields there were fewer enemies: there was one desperate chance. Of those who took it, the first two were killed almost as soon as they touched the ground; — the third, a French stranger, although frightfully wounded, was able to run for his life nearly two hundred yards before being overtaken and despatched. But two others could profit by the incident; — gaining the high canes, they fled at a crouching run between the stems, — doubling, — twisting, — and were quickly lost to view. . . . *"Béké lacampagne mênm!"* — cried the disappointed pursuers: — *"yo ka fenne kanne!"* Only a country Creole could have known the trick, successfully practised by maroon negroes — *fenne kanne* (splitting the cane). . . . Darkness and the terror of serpents aided their flight.

Some chivalrous men, — M. de Kersaint was of these, — refused that desperate chance; remained to give the consolation of their presence to the helpless women, — mothers and wives, and young girls delicately bred, into the perfumed quiet of whose existence no shadow of fear had ever fallen before. . . . There were still nearly thirty souls within the flaming house; and the soldiers were still confined to their barracks!

The smoke being blown to the north, the view of the burning dwelling continued almost unobscured on the street side; — but as yet, since the

stone-throwing began, no one had appeared at the front windows. The rabble watched and wondered: it seemed as if all communication between the front and rear of the besieged house had already been cut off, so that the last scene of the tragedy would remain hidden from them — a brutal disappointment! The first frenzy had exhausted itself: there remained only that revolting apathy which in savage natures follows the perpetration of a monstrous act; — the tempest of outcries subsided to a low tide-roar of excited converse. . . .

— " They are women and children who scream like that."

— " Malediction! they are békés — let them all roast together! "

— " *Ouill papa!* — they burned enough of us when they had the power to do it."

— " Yes! they burned poor negresses for sorcery. The priest who confessed them said they were innocent."

— " *Ah! c'est taille-Toto ça!* — that was in the old times! "

— " Old times! We don't forget. These are the new times, *monfi!* "

— " *C'est jusse!* . . . We are fighting for our liberty now."

— " Houlo! " . . . A new roar went up: — there was an apparition at one of the windows.

— " *Mi! yon négresse!* "

— " It is the *da!* — *Jesis-Maïa!* "

— " *Pé!* — *pézautt!* "

— " Pé! " . . . The word ran from mouth to mouth; — almost a hush followed its passage through the crowd, a hush of malignant expectation; — then Youma's powerful contralto rang out with the distinctness of a bugle-call.

— " *Eh! tas de capons!* " she cried, fearlessly, — " cowards afraid to face men! Do you believe you will win your liberty by burning women and children? . . . Who were the mothers of you? "

— " We are burning békés," screamed a negress in response: " they kill us; we kill them. *C'est jusse!* "

— " You lie! " cried Youma. " The békés never murdered women and children."

— " They did! " vociferated a mulatto in the mob, better dressed than his fellows; — " they did! In seventeen hundred and twenty-one! In seventeen hundred and twenty-five! " . . .

— " *Aïe, macaque!* " mocked Youma. " So you burn negresses now for imitation! What have the negresses done to you, Ape? "

— " They are with the békés."

— " You were with the békés yesterday, the day before yesterday, and always, — every one of you. The békés gave you to eat, — the békês gave you to drink, — the békés cared for you when you were sick. . . . The békés gave *you* freedom, O you traitor mulatto! — gave you a name, *saloprie!* — gave you the clothes you wear, ingrate! *You!* — you are not

fighting for your liberty, liar! — the békés gave it to you long ago for your black mother's sake! . . . *Fai doctè, milatt!* — I know you! . . . coward without a family, without a race! — *fai filosofe,* O you renegade, who would see a negress burn because a negress was your mother! — *Allé! — bâtà-béké!*" . . .

Then Youma could not make herself heard: a fresh outburst of vociferation drowned her voice. But her reproaches had struck home in at least one direction: she had touched and stirred the smouldering contempt, the secret jealous hate of the black for the freedman of color; and the mulatto's discomfiture was hailed by yells of ironical laughter. In the same moment there was a violent pushing and swaying; — some one was forcing his way to the front through all the pressure, — rapidly, furiously, — smiting with his elbows, battering with his shoulders: a giant *capré*. . . . He freed himself, and sprang into the clear space before the flaming building, — making his cutlass flicker about his head, — and shouted: —

— "*Nou pa ka brilé négresse!*" . . .

The mulatto put to scorn advanced and would have spoken; — ere he could utter a word, the travailleur, with a sudden backward blow of his unarmed hand, struck him to the ground.

— "*A moin! méfouè!*" thundered the tall new-comer; — "Stand by me, brothers! — we do not burn negresses!"

And Youma knew it was Gabriel who stood there alone, — colossal, menacing, magnificent, — daring the hell about him for her sake. . . .

— "*Ni raison! ni raison!*" responded numbers. . . . "*Non! nou pa ka brilé négresse! . . . Châché léchelle!*" Gabriel had forced sympathy, — wrung some sentiment of compassion from those wild-beast hearts. . . . "*Pòté léchelle vini! — içi yon léchelle!*" was clamored through the crowd . . . "a ladder! — a ladder!"

Five minutes, — and a ladder touched the window. Gabriel himself ascended it, — reached the summit, — put out his iron hand. Even as he did so, Youma, stooping to the sill, lifted Mayotte from behind it.

The child was stupid with terror; — she did not know him.

— "Can you save her?" asked Youma, — holding up the little fair-haired girl.

Gabriel could only shake his head; — the street sent up so frightful a cry. . . .

— "*Non! — non! — non! — non! — pa lè yche-béké! — janmain yche-béké!*"

— "Then you cannot save me!" cried Youma, clasping the child to her bosom, — "*janmain! janmain, mon ami!*"

— "Youma, in the name of God. . . ."

— "In the name of God you ask me to be a coward! . . . Are you vile, Gabriel? — are you base? . . . Save myself and leave the child to burn? . . . Go!"

— " Leave the *béké's yche!* — leave it! — leave it, girl! " shouted a hundred voices.

— " *Moin!* " cried Youma, retreating beyond the reach of Gabriel's hand, — " *moin!* . . . Never shall I leave it, — never! I shall go to God with it."

— " Burn with it, then! " howled the negroes . . . " down with that ladder! down with it, down with it! " Gabriel had barely time to save himself, when the ladder was dragged away. All the first fury of the riot seemed to have been rekindled by the sight of the child; — again broke forth the tempest of maledictions.

But it calmed: there was another reaction. . . . Gabriel had men to strive with him. They forced the ladder once more into position; — they formed a desperate guard about it with their cutlasses; — they called to Youma to descend. . . . She only waved her hand in disdain: she knew she could not save the child.

And the fierce heat below began to force back the guard at the foot of the ladder. . . . Suddenly Gabriel uttered a curse of despair. Touched by a spirit of flame, the ladder itself had ignited, — and was burning furiously.

Youma remained at the window. There was now neither hate nor fear in her fine face: it was calm as in the night when Gabriel had seen her stand unmoved with her foot on the neck of the serpent.

Then a sudden light flared up behind her, and brightened. Against it her tall figure appeared, as in the Chapel of the Anchorage Gabriel had seen, against a background of gold, the figure of *Notre Dame du Bon Port*. . . . Still her smooth features expressed no emotion. Her eyes were bent upon the blond head hiding against her breast; — her lips moved; — she was speaking to the child. . . . Little Mayotte looked up one moment into the dark and beautiful bending face, — and joined her slender hands, as if to pray.

But with a piteous cry, she clung to Youma's bosom again. For the thick walls quivered as walls quiver when a hurricane blows; — and there were shrieks, — frantic, heart-sickening, from the rear, — and a noise of ruining, as of smothered thunder. Youma drew off her foulard of yellow silk, and wrapped it about the head of the child: then began to caress her with calm tenderness, — murmuring to her, — swaying her softly in her arms, — all placidly, as though lulling her to sleep. Never to Gabriel's watching eyes had Youma seemed so beautiful.

Another minute — and he saw her no more. The figure and the light vanished together, as beams and floor and roof all quaked down at once into darkness. . . . Only the skeleton of stone remained, — black-smoking to the stars.

And stillness came, — a stillness broken only by the hissing and crepitation of the stifled fire, the booming of the tocsin, the far blowing of the

great sea-shells. The victims had ceased to shriek; — the murderers stood appalled by the ghastliness of their consummated crime.

Then, from below, the flames wrestled out again, — crimsoning the smoke whirls, the naked masonry, the wreck of timbers. They wriggled upward, lengthening, lapping together, — lifted themselves erect, — grew taller, fiercer, — twined into one huge fluid spire of tongues that flapped and shivered high into the night. . . .

The yellowing light swelled, — expanded from promontory to promontory, — palpitated over the harbor, — climbed the broken slopes of the dead volcano leagues through the gloom. The wooded mornes towered about the city in weird illumination, — seeming loftier than by day, — blanching and shadowing alternately with the soaring and sinking of fire; — and at each huge pulsing of the glow, the white cross of their central summit stood revealed, with the strange passion of its black Christ.

. . . And the same hour, from the other side of the world, — a ship was running before the sun, bearing the Republican gift of liberty and promise of universal suffrage to the slaves of Martinique.

MARY E. WILKINS FREEMAN

(1862–)

Mary Eleanor Wilkins was born at Randolph, Massachusetts, in 1862. Her family was descended of Puritans. At an early age she was taken to Vermont. After attending Mt. Holyoke Seminary, she returned to Randolph. In 1902 she married, and has since that time resided in New Jersey. Her first published book was a volume of short stories, which appeared in 1886. This was followed in quick succession by several other collections, and then by several novels. Mrs. Freeman has portrayed in her best work the life of the New England farming folk, with great sympathy and understanding.

Evelina's Garden, though not so well known as some of Mrs. Freeman's short stories, is a remarkable example of her work.

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EVELINA'S GARDEN

On the south a high arbor-vitæ hedge separated Evelina's garden from the road. The hedge was so high that when the school-children lagged by, and the secrets behind it fired them with more curiosity than those between their battered book covers, the tallest of them by stretching up on tiptoe could not peer over. And so they were driven to childish engineering feats, and would set to work and pick away sprigs of the arbor-vitæ with their little fingers, and make peep-holes — but small ones, that Evelina might not discern them. Then they would thrust their pink faces into the hedge, and the enduring fragrance of it would come to their nostrils like a gust of aromatic breath from the mouth of the northern woods, and peer into Evelina's garden as through the green tubes of vernal telescopes.

Then suddenly hollyhocks, blooming in rank and file, seemed to be marching upon them like platoons of soldiers, with detonations of color that dazzled their peeping eyes; and, indeed, the whole garden seemed charging with its mass of riotous bloom upon the hedge. They could scarcely take in details of marigold and phlox and pinks and London-pride and cock's-combs, and prince's-feathers waving overhead like standards.

Sometimes also there was the purple flutter of Evelina's gown; and Evelina's face, delicately faded, hung about with softly drooping gray

curls, appeared suddenly among the flowers, like another flower uncannily instinct with nervous melancholy.

Then the children would fall back from their peep-holes, and huddle off together with scared giggles. They were afraid of Evelina. There was a shade of mystery about her which stimulated their childish fancies when they heard her discussed by their elders. They might easily have conceived her to be some baleful fairy intrenched in her green stronghold, withheld from leaving it by the fear of some dire penalty for magical sins. Summer and winter, spring and fall, Evelina Adams never was seen outside her own domain of old mansion-house and garden, and she had not set her slim lady feet in the public highway for nearly forty years, if the stories were true.

People differed as to the reason why. Some said she had had an unfortunate love affair, that her heart had been broken, and she had taken upon herself a vow of seclusion from the world, but nobody could point to the unworthy lover who had done her this harm. When Evelina was a girl, not one of the young men of the village had dared address her. She had been set apart by birth and training, and also by a certain exclusiveness of manner, if not of nature. Her father, old Squire Adams, had been the one man of wealth and college learning in the village. He had owned the one fine old mansion-house, with its white front propped on great Corinthian pillars, overlooking the village like a broad brow of superiority.

He had owned the only coach and four. His wife during her short life had gone dressed in rich brocades and satins that rustled loud in the ears of the village women, and her nodding plumes had dazzled the eyes under their modest hoods. Hardly a woman in the village but could tell — for it had been handed down like a folk-lore song from mother to daughter — just what Squire Adams's wife wore when she walked out first as bride to meeting. She had been clad all in blue.

" Squire Adams's wife, when she walked out bride, she wore a blue satin brocade gown, all wrought with blue flowers of a darker blue, cut low neck and short sleeves. She wore long blue silk mitts wrought with blue, blue satin shoes, and blue silk clocked stockings. And she wore a blue crape mantle that was brought from over-seas, and a blue velvet hat, with a long blue ostrich feather curled over it — it was so long it reached her shoulder, and waved when she walked; and she carried a little blue crape fan with ivory sticks." So the women and girls told each other when the Squire's bride had been dead nearly seventy years.

The blue bride attire was said to be still in existence, packed away in a cedar chest, as the Squire had ordered after his wife's death. " He stood over the woman that took care of his wife whilst she packed the things away, and he never shed a tear, but she used to hear him a-goin' up the north chamber nights, when he couldn't sleep, to look at 'em," the women told.

People had thought the Squire would marry again. They said Evelina,

who was only four years old, needed a mother, and they selected one and another of the good village girls. But the Squire never married. He had a single woman, who dressed in black silk, and wore always a black wrought veil over the side of her bonnet, come to live with them, to take charge of Evelina. She was said to be a distant relative of the Squire's wife, and was much looked up to by the village people, although she never did more than interlace, as it were, the fringes of her garments with theirs. " She's stuck up," they said, and felt, curiously enough, a certain pride in the fact when they met her in the street and she ducked her long chin stiffly into the folds of her black shawl by way of salutation.

When Evelina was fifteen years old this single woman died, and the village women went to her funeral, and bent over her lying in a last helpless dignity in her coffin, and stared with awed freedom at her cold face. After that Evelina was sent away to school, and did not return, except for a yearly vacation, for six years to come. Then she returned, and settled down in her old home to live out her life, and end her days in a perfect semblance of peace, if it were not peace.

Evelina never had any young school friend to visit her; she had never, so far as any one knew, a friend of her own age. She lived alone with her father and three old servants. She went to meeting, and drove with the Squire in his chaise. The coach was never used after his wife's death, except to carry Evelina to and from school. She and the Squire also took long walks, but they never exchanged aught but the merest civilities of good-days and nods with the neighbors whom they met, unless indeed the Squire had some matter of business to discuss. Then Evelina stood aside and waited, her fair face drooping gravely aloof. She was very pretty, with a gentle high-bred prettiness that impressed the village folk, although they looked at it somewhat askance.

Evelina's figure was tall, and had a fine slenderness; her silken skirts hung straight from the narrow silk ribbon that girt her slim waist; there was a languidly graceful bend in her long white throat; her long delicate hands hung inertly at her sides among her skirt folds, and were never seen to clasp anything; her softly clustering fair curls hung over her thin blooming cheeks, and her face could scarce be seen, unless, as she seldom did, she turned and looked full upon one. Then her dark blue eyes, with a little nervous frown between them, shone out radiantly; her thin lips showed a warm red, and her beauty startled one.

Everybody wondered why she did not have a lover, why some fine young man had not been smitten by her while she had been away at school. They did not know that the school had been situated in another little village, the counterpart of the one in which she had been born, wherein a fitting mate for a bird of her feather could hardly be found. The simple young men of the country-side were at once attracted and intimidated by her. They cast fond sly glances across the meeting-house at her lovely face, but they were

confused before her when they jostled her in the doorway and the rose and lavender scent of her lady garments came in their faces. Not one of them dared accost her, much less march boldly upon the great Corinthian-pillared house, raise the brass knocker, and declare himself a suitor for the Squire's daughter.

One young man there was, indeed, who treasured in his heart an experience so subtle and so slight that he could scarcely believe in it himself. He never recounted it to mortal soul, but kept it as a secret sacred between himself and his own nature, but something to be scoffed at and set aside by others.

It had happened one Sabbath day in summer, when Evelina had not been many years home from school, as she sat in the meeting-house in her Sabbath array of rose-colored satin gown, and white bonnet trimmed with a long white feather and a little wreath of feathery green, that of a sudden she raised her head and turned her face, and her blue eyes met this young man's full upon hers, with all his heart in them, and it was for a second as if her own heart leaped to the surface, and he saw it, although afterwards he scarce believed it to be true.

Then a pallor crept over Evelina's delicately brilliant face. She turned it away, and her curls falling softly from under the green wreath on her bonnet brim hid it. The young man's cheeks were a hot red, and his heart beat loudly in his ears when he met her in the doorway after the sermon was done. His eager, timorous eyes sought her face, but she never looked his way. She laid her slim hand in its cream-colored silk mitt on the Squire's arm; her satin gown rustled softly as she passed before him, shrinking against the wall to give her room, and a faint fragrance which seemed like the very breath of the unknown delicacy and exclusiveness of life came to his bewildered senses.

Many a time he cast furtive glances across the meeting-house at Evelina, but she never looked his way again. If his timid boy-eyes could have seen her cheek behind its veil of curls, he might have discovered that the color came and went before his glances, although it was strange how she could have been conscious of them; but he never knew.

And he also never knew how, when he walked past the Squire's house of a Sunday evening, dressed in his best, with his shoulders thrust consciously back, and the windows in the westering sun looked full of blank gold to his furtive eyes, Evelina was always peeping at him from behind a shutter, and he never dared go in. His intuitions were not like hers, and so nothing happened that might have, and he never fairly knew what he knew. But that he never told, even to his wife when he married; for his hot young blood grew weary and impatient with this vain courtship, and he turned to one of his villagemates, who met him fairly half way, and married her within a year.

On the Sunday when he and his bride first appeared in the meeting-

house Evelina went up the aisle behind her father in an array of flowered brocade, stiff with threads of silver, so wonderful that people all turned their heads to stare at her. She wore also a new bonnet of rose-colored satin, and her curls were caught back a little, and her face showed as clear and beautiful as an angel's.

The young bridegroom glanced at her once across the meeting-house, then he looked at his bride in her gay wedding finery with a faithful look.

When Evelina met them in the doorway, after meeting was done, she bowed with a sweet cold grace to the bride, who courtesied blushingly in return, with an awkward sweep of her foot in the bridal satin shoe. The bridegroom did not look at Evelina at all. He held his chin well down in his stock with solemn embarrassment, and passed out stiffly, his bride on his arm.

Evelina, shining in the sun like a silver lily, went up the street, her father stalking beside her with stately swings of his cane, and that was the last time she was ever seen at meeting. Nobody knew why.

When Evelina was a little over thirty her father died. There was not much active grief for him in the village; he had really figured therein more as a stately monument of his own grandeur than anything else. He had been a man of little force of character, and that little had seemed to degenerate since his wife died. An inborn dignity of manner might have served to disguise his weakness with any others than these shrewd New-Englanders, but they read him rightly. " The Squire wa'n't ever one to set the river a-fire," they said. Then, moreover, he left none of his property to the village to build a new meeting-house or a town-house. It all went to Evelina.

People expected that Evelina would surely show herself in her mourning at meeting the Sunday after the Squire died, but she did not. Moreover, it began to be gradually discovered that she never went out in the village street nor crossed the boundaries of her own domains after her father's death. She lived in the great house with her three servants — a man and his wife, and the woman who had been with her mother when she died. Then it was that Evelina's garden began. There had always been a garden at the back of the Squire's house, but not like this, and only a low fence had separated it from the road. Now one morning in the autumn the people saw Evelina's man-servant, John Darby, setting out the arbor-vitæ hedge, and in the spring after that there were ploughing and seed-sowing extending over a full half-acre, which later blossomed out in glory.

Before the hedge grew so high Evelina could be seen at work in her garden. She was often stooping over the flower-beds in the early morning when the village was first astir, and she moved among them with her watering-pot in the twilight — a shadowy figure that might, from her grace and her constancy to the flowers, have been Flora herself.

As the years went on, the arbor-vitæ hedge got each season a new growth and waxed taller, until Evelina could no longer be seen above it. That was

an annoyance to people, because the quiet mystery of her life kept their curiosity alive, until it was in a constant struggle, as it were, with the green luxuriance of the hedge.

" John Darby had ought to trim that hedge," they said. They accosted him in the street: " John, if ye don't cut that hedge down a little it'll all die out." But he only made a surly grunting response, intelligible to himself alone, and passed on. He was an Englishman, and had lived in the Squire's family since he was a boy.

He had a nature capable of only one simple line of force, with no radiations or parallels, and that had early resolved itself into the service of the Squire and his house. After the Squire's death he married a woman who lived in the family. She was much older than himself, and had a high temper, but was a good servant, and he married her to keep her to her allegiance to Evelina. Then he bent her, without her knowledge, to take his own attitude towards his mistress. No more could be gotten out of John Darby's wife than out of John Darby concerning the doings at the Squire's house. She met curiosity with a flash of hot temper, and he with surly taciturnity, and both intimidated.

The third of Evelina's servants was the woman who had nursed her mother, and she was naturally subdued and undemonstrative, and rendered still more so by a ceaseless monotony of life. She never went to meeting, and was seldom seen outside the house. A passing vision of a long white-capped face at a window was about all the neighbors ever saw of this woman.

So Evelina's gentle privacy was well guarded by her own household, as by a faithful system of domestic police. She grew old peacefully behind her green hedge, shielded effectually from all rough bristles of curiosity. Every new spring her own bloom showed paler beside the new bloom of her flowers, but people could not see it.

Some thirty years after the Squire's death the man John Darby died; his wife, a year later. That left Evelina alone with the old woman who had nursed her mother. She was very old, but not feeble, and quite able to perform the simple household tasks for herself and Evelina. An old man, who saved himself from the almshouse in such ways, came daily to do the rougher part of the garden-work in John Darby's stead. He was aged and decrepit; his muscles seemed able to perform their appointed tasks only through the accumulated inertia of a patiently toilsome life in the same tracks. Apparently they would have collapsed had he tried to force them to aught else than the holding of the ploughshare, the pulling of weeds, the digging around the roots of flowers, and the planting of seeds.

Every autumn he seemed about to totter to his fall among the fading flowers; every spring it was like Death himself urging on the resurrection; but he lived on year after year, and tended well Evelina's garden, and the gardens of other maiden-women and widows in the village. He was taciturn,

grubbing among his green beds as silently as a worm, but now and then he warmed a little under a fire of questions concerning Evelina's garden. "Never see none sech flowers in nobody's garden in this town, not sence I knowed 'nough to tell a pink from a piny," he would mumble. His speech was thick; his words were all uncouthly slurred; the expression of his whole life had come more through his old knotted hands of labor than through his tongue. But he would wipe his forehead with his shirt-sleeve and lean a second on his spade, and his face would change at the mention of the garden. Its wealth of bloom illumined his old mind, and the roses and honeysuckles and pinks seemed for a second to be reflected in his bleared old eyes.

There had never been in the village such a garden as this of Evelina Adams's. All the old blooms which had come over the seas with the early colonists, and started as it were their own colony of flora in the new country, flourished there. The naturalized pinks and phlox and hollyhocks and the rest, changed a little in color and fragrance by the conditions of a new climate and soil, were all in Evelina's garden, and no one dreamed what they meant to Evelina; and she did not dream herself, for her heart was always veiled to her own eyes, like the face of a nun. The roses and pinks, the poppies and heart's-ease, were to this maiden-woman, who had innocently and helplessly outgrown her maiden heart, in the place of all the loves of life which she had missed. Her affections had forced an outlet in roses; they exhaled sweetness in pinks, and twined and clung in honeysuckle-vines. The daffodils, when they came up in the spring, comforted her like the smiles of children; when she saw the first rose, her heart leaped as at the face of a lover.

She had lost the one way of human affection, but her feet had found a little single side-track of love, which gave her still a zest in the journey of life. Even in the winter Evelina had her flowers, for she kept those that would bear transplanting in pots, and all the sunny windows in her house were gay with them. She would also not let a rose leaf fall and waste in the garden soil, or a sprig of lavender or thyme. She gathered them all, and stored them away in chests and drawers and old china bowls — the whole house seemed laid away in rose leaves and lavender. Evelina's clothes gave out at every motion that fragrance of dead flowers which is like the fragrance of the past, and has a sweetness like that of sweet memories. Even the cedar chest where Evelina's mother's blue bridal array was stored had its till heaped with rose leaves and lavender.

When Evelina was nearly seventy years old the old nurse who had lived with her her whole life died. People wondered then what she would do. "She can't live all alone in that great house," they said. But she did live there alone six months, until spring, and people used to watch her evening lamp when it was put out, and the morning smoke from her kitchen chimney. "It ain't safe for her to be there alone in that great house," they said.

But early in April a young girl appeared one Sunday in the old Squire's pew. Nobody had seen her come to town, and nobody knew who she was or where she came from, but the old people said she looked just as Evelina Adams used to when she was young, and she must be some relation. The old man who had used to look across the meeting-house at Evelina, over forty years ago, looked across now at this young girl, and gave a great start, and his face paled under his gray beard stubble. His old wife gave an anxious, wondering glance at him, and crammed a peppermint into his hand. "Anything the matter, father?" she whispered; but he only gave his head a half-surly shake, and then fastened his eyes straight ahead upon the pulpit. He had reason to that day, for his only son, Thomas, was going to preach his first sermon therein as a candidate. His wife ascribed his nervousness to that. She put a peppermint in her own mouth and sucked it comfortably. "That's all 't is," she thought to herself. "Father always was easy worked up," and she looked proudly up at her son sitting on the hair-cloth sofa in the pulpit, leaning his handsome young head on his hand, as he had seen old divines do. She never dreamed that her old husband sitting beside her was possessed of an inner life so strange to her that she would not have known him had she met him in the spirit. And, indeed, it had been so always, and she had never dreamed of it. Although he had been faithful to his wife, the image of Evelina Adams in her youth, and that one love-look which she had given him, had never left his soul, but had given it a guise and complexion of which his nearest and dearest knew nothing.

It was strange; but now, as he looked up at his own son as he arose in the pulpit, he could seem to see a look of that fair young Evelina, who had never had a son to inherit her beauty. He had certainly a delicate brilliancy of complexion, which he could have gotten directly from neither father nor mother; and whence came that little nervous frown between his dark blue eyes? His mother had blue eyes, but not like his; they flashed over the great pulpit Bible with a sweet fire that matched the memory in his father's heart.

But the old man put the fancy away from him in a minute; it was one which his stern common-sense always overcame. It was impossible that Thomas Merriam should resemble Evelina Adams; indeed, people always called him the very image of his father.

The father tried to fix his mind upon his son's sermon, but presently he glanced involuntarily across the meeting-house at the young girl, and again his heart leaped and his face paled; but he turned his eyes gravely back to the pulpit, and his wife did not notice. Now and then she thrust a sharp elbow in his side to call his attention to a grand point in their son's discourse. The odor of peppermint was strong in his nostrils, but through it all he seemed to perceive the rose and lavender scent of Evelina Adams's youthful garments. Whether it was with him simply the memory of an odor, which affected him like the odor itself, or not, those in the vicinity of

the Squire's pew were plainly aware of it. The gown which the strange young girl wore was, as many an old woman discovered to her neighbor with loud whispers, one of Evelina's, which had been laid away in a sweet-smelling chest since her old girlhood. It had been somewhat altered to suit the fashion of a later day, but the eyes which had fastened keenly upon it when Evelina first wore it up the meeting-house aisle could not mistake it. "It's Evelina Adams's lavender satin made over," one whispered, with a sharp hiss of breath, in the other's ear.

The lavender satin, deepening into purple in the folds, swept in a rich circle over the knees of the young girl in the Squire's pew. She folded her little hands, which were encased in Evelina's cream-colored silk mitts, over it, and looked up at the young minister, and listened to his sermon with a grave and innocent dignity, as Evelina had done before her. Perhaps the resemblance between this young girl and the young girl of the past was more one of mien than aught else, although the type of face was the same. This girl had the same fine sharpness of feature and delicately bright color, and she also wore her hair in curls, although they were tied back from her face with a black velvet ribbon, and did not veil it when she drooped her head, as Evelina's used to do.

The people divided their attention between her and the new minister. Their curiosity goaded them in equal measure with their spiritual zeal. "I can't wait to find out who that girl is," one woman whispered to another.

The girl herself had no thought of the commotion which she awakened. When the service was over, and she walked with a gentle maiden stateliness, which seemed a very copy of Evelina's own, out of the meeting-house, down the street to the Squire's house, and entered it, passing under the stately Corinthian pillars, with a last purple gleam of her satin skirts, she never dreamed of the eager attention that followed her.

It was several days before the village people discovered who she was. The information had to be obtained, by a process like mental thumb-screwing, from the old man who tended Evelina's garden, but at last they knew. She was the daughter of a cousin of Evelina's on the father's side. Her name was Evelina Leonard; she had been named for her father's cousin. She had been finely brought up, and had attended a Boston school for young ladies. Her mother had been dead many years, and her father had died some two years ago, leaving her with only a very little money, which was now all gone, and Evelina Adams had invited her to live with her. Evelina Adams had herself told the old gardener, seeing his scant curiosity was somewhat awakened by the garden, but he seemed to have almost forgotten it when the people questioned him.

"She'll leave her all her money, most likely," they said, and they looked at this new Evelina in the old Evelina's perfumed gowns with awe.

However, in the space of a few months the opinion upon this matter was divided. Another cousin of Evelina Adams's came to town, and this time

an own cousin — a widow in fine black bombazine, portly and florid, walking with a majestic swell, and, moreover, having with her two daughters, girls of her own type, not so far advanced. This woman hired one of the village cottages, and it was rumored that Evelina Adams paid the rent. Still, it was considered that she was not very intimate with these last relatives. The neighbors watched, and saw, many a time, Mrs. Martha Loomis and her girls try the doors of the Adams house, scudding around angrily from front to side and back, and knock and knock again, but with no admittance. " Evelina she won't let none of 'em in more 'n once a week," the neighbors said. It was odd that, although they had deeply resented Evelina's seclusion on their own accounts, they were rather on her side in this matter, and felt a certain delight when they witnessed a crestfallen retreat of the widow and her daughters. " I don't s'pose she wants them Loomises marchin' in on her every minute," they said.

The new Evelina was not seen much with the other cousins, and she made no acquaintances in the village. Whether she was to inherit all the Adams property or not, she seemed, at any rate, heiress to all the elder Evelina's habits of life. She worked with her in the garden, and wore her old girlish gowns, and kept almost as close at home as she. She often, however, walked abroad in the early dusk, stepping along in a grave and stately fashion, as the elder Evelina had used to do, holding her skirts away from the dewy roadside weeds, her face showing out in the twilight like a white flower, as if it had a pale light of its own.

Nobody spoke to her; people turned furtively after she had passed and stared after her, but they never spoke. This young Evelina did not seem to expect it. She passed along with the lids cast down over her blue eyes, and the rose and lavender scent of her garments came back in their faces.

But one night when she was walking slowly along, a full half-mile from home, she heard rapid footsteps behind, and the young minister, Thomas Merriam, came up beside her and spoke.

" Good-evening," said he, and his voice was a little hoarse through nervousness.

Evelina started, and turned her fair face up towards his. " Good-evening," she responded, and courtesied as she had been taught at school, and stood close to the wall, that he might pass; but Thomas Merriam paused also.

" I — " he began, but his voice broke. He cleared his throat angrily, and went on. " I have seen you in meeting," he said, with a kind of defiance, more of himself than of her. After all, was he not the minister, and had he not the right to speak to everybody in the congregation? Why should he embarrass himself?

" Yes, sir," replied Evelina. She stood drooping her head before him, and yet there was a certain delicate hauteur about her. Thomas was afraid to

speak again. They both stood silent for a moment, and then Evelina stirred softly, as if to pass on, and Thomas spoke out bravely. "Is your cousin, Miss Adams, well?" said he.

"She is pretty well, I thank you, sir."

"I have been wanting to — call," he began; then he hesitated again. His handsome young face was blushing crimson.

Evelina's own color deepened. She turned her face away. "Cousin Evelina never sees callers," she said, with grave courtesy; "perhaps you did not know. She has not for a great many years."

"Yes, I did know it," returned Thomas Merriam; "that's the reason I haven't called."

"Cousin Evelina is not strong," remarked the young girl, and there was a savor of apology in her tone.

"But — " stammered Thomas; then he stopped again. "May I — has she any objections to — anybody's coming to see you?"

Evelina started. "I am afraid Cousin Evelina would not approve," she answered, primly. Then she looked up in his face, and a girlish piteousness came into her own. "I am very sorry," she said, and there was a catch in her voice.

Thomas bent over her impetuously. All his ministerial state fell from him like an outer garment of the soul. He was young, and he had seen this girl Sunday after Sunday. He had written all his sermons with her image before his eyes, he had preached to her, and her only, and she had come between his heart and all the nations of the earth in his prayers. "Oh," he stammered out, "I am afraid you can't be very happy living there the way you do. Tell me — "

Evelina turned her face away with sudden haughtiness. "My cousin Evelina is very kind to me, sir," she said.

"But — you must be lonesome with nobody — of your own age — to speak to," persisted Thomas, confusedly.

"I never cared much for youthful company. It is getting dark; I must be going," said Evelina. "I wish you good-evening, sir."

"Shan't I — walk home with you?" asked Thomas, falteringly.

"It isn't necessary, thank you, and I don't think Cousin Evelina would approve," she replied, primly; and her light dress fluttered away into the dusk and out of sight like the pale wing of a moth.

Poor Thomas Merriam walked on with his head in a turmoil. His heart beat loud in his ears. "I've made her mad with me," he said to himself, using the old rustic school-boy vernacular, from which he did not always depart in his thoughts, although his ministerial dignity guarded his conversations. Thomas Merriam came of a simple homely stock, whose speech came from the emotions of the heart, all unregulated by the usages of the schools. He was the first for generations who had aspired to college learning and a profession, and had trained his tongue by the models of the educated

and polite. He could not help, at times, the relapse of his thoughts, and their speaking to himself in the dialect of his family and his ancestors. " She's 'way above me, and I ought to ha' known it," he further said, with the meekness of an humble but fiercely independent race, which is meek to itself alone. He would have maintained his equality with his last breath to an opponent; in his heart of hearts he felt himself below the scion of the one old gentle family of his native village.

This young Evelina, by the fine dignity which had been born with her and not acquired by precept and example, by the sweetly formal diction which seemed her native tongue, had filled him with awe. Now, when he thought she was angered with him, he felt beneath her lady feet, his nostrils choked with a spiritual dust of humiliation.

He went forward blindly. The dusk had deepened; from either side of the road, from the mysterious gloom of the bushes, came the twangs of the katydids, like some coarse rustic quarrellers, each striving for the last word in a dispute not even dignified by excess of passion.

Suddenly somebody jostled him to his own side of the path. " That you, Thomas? Where you been? " said a voice in his ear.

" That you, father? Down to the post-office."

" Who was that you was talkin' with back there? "

" Miss Evelina Leonard."

" That girl that's stayin' there — to the old Squire's? "

" Yes." The son tried to move on, but his father stood before him dumbly for a minute. " I must be going, father. I've got to work on my sermon," Thomas said, impatiently.

Wait a minute," said his father. " I've got something to say to ye, Thomas, an' this is as good a time to say it as any. There ain't anybody 'round. I don't know as ye'll thank me for it — but mother said the other day that she thought you'd kind of an idea — she said you asked her if she thought it would be anything out of the way for you to go up to the Squire's to make a call. Mother she thinks you can step in anywheres, but I don't know. I know your book-learnin' and your bein' a minister has set you up a good deal higher than your mother and me and any of our folks, and I feel as if you were good enough for anybody, as far as that goes; but that ain't all. Some folks have different startin'-points in this world, and they see things different; and when they do, it ain't much use tryin' to make them walk alongside and see things alike. Their eyes have got different cants, and they ain't able to help it. Now this girl she's related to the old Squire, and she's been brought up different, and she started ahead, even if her father did lose all his property. She 'ain't never eat in the kitchen, nor been scart to set down in the parlor, and satin and velvet, and silver spoons, and cream-pots 'ain't never looked anything out of the common to her, and they always will to you. No matter how many such things you may live to have, they'll always get a little the better of ye. She'll be 'way above 'em;

and you won't, no matter how hard you try. Some ideas can't never mix; and when ideas can't mix, folks can't."

"I never said they could," returned Thomas, shortly. "I can't stop to talk any longer, father. I must go home."

"No, you wait a minute, Thomas. I'm goin' to say out what I started to, and then I sha'n't ever bring it up again. What I was comin' at was this: I wanted to warn ye a little. You mustn't set too much store by little things that you think mean consider'ble when they don't. Looks don't count for much, and I want you to remember it, and not be upset by 'em."

Thomas gave a great start and colored high. "I'd like to know what you mean, father," he cried, sharply.

"Nothin'. I don't mean nothin', only I'm older 'n you, and it's come in my way to know some things, and it's fittin' you should profit by it. A young woman's looks at you don't count for much. I don't s'pose she knows why she gives 'em herself half the time; they ain't like us. It's best you should make up your mind to it; if you don't, you may find it out by the hardest. That's all. I ain't never goin' to bring this up again."

"I'd like to know what you mean, father." Thomas's voice shook with embarrassment and anger.

"I ain't goin' to say anything more about it," replied the old man. "Mary Ann Pease and Arabella Mann are both in the settin'-room with your mother. I thought I'd tell ye, in case ye didn't want to see 'em, and wanted to go to work on your sermon."

Thomas made an impatient ejaculation as he strode off. When he reached the large white house where he lived he skirted it carefully. The chirping treble of girlish voices came from the open sitting-room window, and he caught a glimpse of a smooth brown head and a high shell comb in front of the candle-light. The young minister tiptoed in the back door and across the kitchen to the back stairs. The sitting-room door was open, and the candle-light streamed out, and the treble voices rose high. Thomas, advancing through the dusky kitchen with cautious steps, encountered suddenly a chair in the dark corner by the stairs, and just saved himself from falling. There was a startled outcry from the sitting-room, and his mother came running into the kitchen with a candle.

"Who is it?" she demanded, valiantly. Then she started and gasped as her son confronted her. He shook a furious warning fist at the sitting-room door and his mother, and edged towards the stairs. She followed him close. "Hadn't you better jest step in a minute?" she whispered. "Them girls have been here an hour, and I know they're waitin' to see you." Thomas shook his head fiercely, and swung himself around the corner into the dark crook of the back stairs. His mother thrust the candle into his hand. "Take this, or you'll break your neck on them stairs," she whispered.

Thomas, stealing up the stairs like a cat, heard one of the girls call to his mother — "Is it robbers, Mis' Merriam? Want us to come an' help

tackle 'em? " — and he fairly shuddered; for Evelina's gentle-lady speech was still in his ears, and this rude girlish call seemed to jar upon his sensibilities.

" The idea of any girl screeching out like that," he muttered. And if he had carried speech as far as his thought, he would have added, " when Evelina is a girl! "

He was so angry that he did not laugh when he heard his mother answer back, in those conclusive tones of hers that were wont to silence all argument: " It ain't anything. Don't be scared. I'm coming right back." Mrs. Merriam scorned subterfuges. She took always a silent stand in a difficulty, and let people infer what they would. When Mary Ann Pease inquired if it was the cat that had made the noise, she asked if her mother had finished her blue and white counterpane.

The two girls waited a half-hour longer, then they went home. " What do you s'pose made that noise out in the kitchen? " asked Arabella Mann of Mary Ann Pease, the minute they were out-of-doors.

" I don't know," replied Mary Ann Pease. She was a broad-backed young girl, and looked like a matron as she hurried along in the dusk.

" Well, I know what I think it was," said Arabella Mann, moving ahead with sharp jerks of her little dark body.

" What? "

" It was him."

" You don't mean — "

" I think it was Thomas Merriam, and he was tryin' to get up the back stairs unbeknownst to anybody, and he run into something."

" What for? "

" Because he didn't want to see *us*."

" Now, Arabella Mann, I don't believe it! He's always real pleasant to me."

" Well, I do believe it, and I guess he'll know it when I set foot in that house again. I guess he'll find out I didn't go there to see him! He needn't feel so fine, if he is the minister; his folks ain't any better than mine, an' we've got 'nough sight handsomer furniture in our parlor."

" Did you see how the tallow had all run down over the candles? "

" Yes, I did. She gave that candle she carried out in the kitchen to him, too. Mother says she wasn't never any kind of a housekeeper."

" Hush! Arabella: here he is coming now."

But it was not Thomas; it was his father, advancing through the evening with his son's gait and carriage. When the two girls discovered that, one tittered out quite audibly, and they scuttled past. They were not rivals; they simply walked faithfully side by side in pursuit of the young minister, giving him as it were an impartial choice. There were even no heart-burnings between them; one always confided in the other when she supposed herself to have found some slight favor in Thomas's sight; and, indeed, the

young minister could scarcely bow to one upon the street unless she flew to the other with the news.

Thomas Merriam himself was aware of all this devotion on the part of the young women of his flock, and it filled him with a sort of angry shame. He could not have told why, but he despised himself for being the object of their attention more than he despised them. His heart sank at the idea of Evelina's discovering it. What would she think of him if she knew all those young women haunted his house and lagged after meeting on the chance of getting a word from him? Suppose she should see their eyes upon his face in meeting time, and decipher their half-unconscious boldness, as he had done against his will. Once Evelina had looked at him, even as the older Evelina had looked at his father, and all other looks of maidens seemed to him like profanations of that, even although he doubted afterwards that he had rightly interpreted it. Full it had seemed to him of that tender maiden surprise and wonder, of that love that knows not itself, and sees its own splendor for the first time in another's face, and flees at the sight. It had happened once when he was coming down the aisle after the sermon and Evelina had met him at the door of her pew. But she had turned her head quickly, and her soft curls flowed over her red cheek, and he doubted ever after if he had read the look aright. When he had gotten the courage to speak to her, and she had met him with the gentle coldness which she had learned of her lady aunt and her teacher in Boston, his doubt was strong upon him. The next Sunday he looked not her way at all. He even tried faithfully from day to day to drive her image from his mind with prayer and religious thoughts, but in spite of himself he would lapse into dreams about her, as if borne by a current of nature too strong to be resisted. And sometimes, upon being awakened from them, as he sat over his sermon with the ink drying on his quill, by the sudden outburst of treble voices in his mother's sitting-room below, the fancy would seize him that possibly these other young damsels took fond liberties with him in their dreams, as he with Evelina, and he resented it with a fierce maidenliness of spirit, although he was a man. The thought that possibly they, over their spinning or their quilting, had in their hearts the image of himself with fond words upon his lips and fond looks in his eyes, filled him with shame and rage, although he took the same liberty with the delicately haughty maiden Evelina.

But Thomas Merriam was not given to undue appreciation of his own fascination, as was proved by his ready discouragement in the case of Evelina. He had the knowledge of his conquests forced upon his understanding until he could no longer evade it. Every day were offerings laid upon his shrine, of pound-cakes and flaky pies, and loaves of white bread, and cups of jelly, whereby the culinary skill of his devotees might be proved. Silken purses and beautiful socks knitted with fancy stitches, and holy book-marks for his Bible, and even a wonderful bedquilt, and a fine

linen shirt with hem-stitched bands, poured in upon him. He burned with angry blushes when his mother, smiling meaningly, passed them over to him. "Put them away, mother; I don't want them," he would growl out, in a distress that was half comic and half pathetic. He would never taste of the tempting viands which were brought to him. "How you act, Thomas!" his mother would say. She was secretly elated by these feminine libations upon the altar of her son. They did not grate upon her sensibilities, which were not delicate. She even tried to assist two or three of the young women in their designs; she would often praise them and their handiwork to her son — and in this she was aided by an old woman aunt of hers who lived with the family. "Nancy Winslow is as handsome a girl as ever I set eyes on, an' I never see any nicer sewin'," Mrs. Merriam said, after the advent of the linen shirt, and she held it up to the light admiringly. "Jest look at that hem-stitchin'!" she said.

"I guess whoever made that shirt calkilated 't would do for a weddin' one," said old Aunt Betty Green, and Thomas made an exclamation and went out of the room, tingling all over with shame and disgust.

"Thomas don't act nateral," said the old woman, glancing after him through her iron-bound spectacles.

"I dun'no' what's got into him," returned his mother.

"Mebbe they foller him up a leetle too close," said Aunt Betty. "I dun'no' as I should have ventured on a shirt when I was a gal. I made a satin vest once for Joshua, but that don't seem quite as p'inted as a shirt. It didn't scare Joshua, nohow. He asked me to have him the next week."

"Well, I dun'no'," said Mrs. Merriam again. "I kind of wish Thomas would settle on somebody, for I'm pestered most to death with 'em, an' I feel as if 't was kind of mean takin' all these things into the house."

"They've 'bout kept ye in sweet cake, 'ain't they, lately?"

"Yes; but I don't feel as if it was jest right for us to eat it up, when 't was brought for Thomas. But he won't touch it. I can't see as he has the least idee of any one of them. I don't believe Thomas has ever seen anybody he wanted for a wife."

"Well, he's got the pick of 'em, a-settin' their caps right in his face," said Aunt Betty.

Neither of them dreamed how the young man, sleeping and eating and living under the same roof, beloved of them since he entered the world, holding himself coldly aloof from this crowd of half-innocently, half-boldly ardent young women, had set up for himself his own divinity of love, before whom he consumed himself in vain worship. His father suspected, and that was all, and he never mentioned the matter again to his son.

After Thomas had spoken to Evelina the weeks went on, and they never exchanged another word, and their eyes never met. But they dwelt constantly within each other's thoughts, and were ever present to each other's spiritual vision. Always as the young minister bent over his sermon-paper,

laboriously tracing out with sputtering quill his application of the articles of the orthodox faith, Evelina's blue eyes seemed to look out at him between the stern doctrines like the eyes of an angel. And he could not turn the pages of the Holy Writ unless he found some passages therein which to his mind treated directly of her, setting forth her graces like a prophecy. "The fairest among women," read Thomas Merriam, and nodded his head, while his heart leaped with the satisfied delight of all its fancies, at the image of his love's fair and gentle face. "Her price is far above rubies," read Thomas Merriam, and he nodded his head again, and saw Evelina shining as with gold and pearls, more precious than all the jewels of the earth. In spite of all his efforts, when Thomas Merriam studied the Scriptures in those days he was more nearly touched by those old human hearts which throbbed down to his through the ages, welding the memories of their old loves to his living one until they seemed to prove its eternity, than by the Messianic prophecies. Often he spent hours upon his knees, but arose with Evelina's face before his very soul in spite of all.

And as for Evelina, she tended the flowers in the elder Evelina's garden with her poor cousin, whose own love-dreams had been illustrated as it were by the pinks and lilies blooming around them when they had all gone out of her heart, and Thomas Merriam's half-bold, half-imploring eyes looked up at her out of every flower and stung her heart like bees. Poor young Evelina feared much lest she had offended Thomas, and yet her own maiden decorum had been offended by him, and she had offended it herself, and she was faint with shame and distress when she thought of it. How had she been so bold and shameless as to give him that look at the meeting-house? and how had he been so cruel as to accost her afterwards? She told herself she had done right for the maintenance of her own maiden dignity, and yet she feared lest she had angered him and hurt him. "Suppose he had been fretted by her coolness?" she thought, and then a great wave of tender pity went over her heart, and she would almost have spoken to him of her own accord. But then she would reflect how he continued to write such beautiful sermons, and prove so clearly and logically the tenets of the faith; and how could he do that with a mind in distress? Scarcely could she herself tend the flower-beds as she should, nor set her embroidery stitches finely and evenly, she was so ill at ease. It must be that Thomas had not given the matter an hour's worry, since he continued to do his work so faithfully and well. And then her own heart would be sorer than ever with the belief that his was happy and at rest, although she would chide herself for it.

And yet this young Evelina was a philosopher and an analyst of human nature in a small way, and she got some slight comfort out of a shrewd suspicion that the heart of a man might love and suffer on a somewhat different principle from the heart of a woman. "It may be," thought Evelina, sitting idle over her embroidery with far-away blue eyes, "that

a man's heart can always turn a while from love to other things as weighty and serious, although he be just as fond, while a woman's heart is always fixed one way by loving, and cannot be turned unless it breaks. And it may be wise," thought young Evelina, " else how could the state be maintained and governed, battles for independence be fought, and even souls be saved, and the gospel carried to the heathen, if men could not turn from the concerns of their own hearts more easily than women? Women should be patient," thought Evelina, " and consider that if they suffer 't is due to the lot which a wise Providence has given them." And yet tears welled up in her earnest blue eyes and fell over her fair cheeks and wet the embroidery — when the elder Evelina was not looking, as she seldom was. The elder Evelina was kind to her young cousin, but there were days when she seemed to dwell alone in her own thoughts, apart from the whole world, and she seldom spoke either to Evelina or her old servant-man.

Young Evelina, trying to atone for her former indiscretion and establish herself again on her height of maiden reserve in Thomas Merriam's eyes, sat resolutely in the meeting-house of a Sabbath day, with her eyes cast down, and after service she glided swiftly down the aisle and was out of the door before the young minister could much more than descend the pulpit stairs, unless he ran an indecorous race.

And young Evelina never at twilight strolled up the road in the direction of Thomas Merriam's home, where she might quite reasonably hope to meet him, since he was wont to go to the store when the evening stage-coach came in with the mail from Boston.

Instead she paced the garden paths, or, when there was not too heavy a dew, rambled across the fields; and there was also a lane where she loved to walk. Whether or not Thomas Merriam suspected this, or had ever seen, as he passed the mouth of the lane, the flutter of maidenly draperies in the distance, it so happened that one evening he also went a-walking there, and met Evelina. He had entered the lane from the highway, and she from the fields at the head. So he saw her first afar off, and could not tell fairly whether her light muslin skirt might not be only a white-flowering bush. For, since his outlook upon life had been so full of Evelina, he had found that often the most common and familiar things would wear for a second a look of her to startle him. And many a time his heart had leaped at the sight of a white bush ahead stirring softly in the evening wind, and he had thought it might be she. Now he said to himself impatiently that this was only another fancy; but soon he saw that it was indeed Evelina, in a light muslin gown, with a little lace kerchief on her head. His handsome young face was white; his lips twitched nervously; but he reached out and pulled a spray of white flowers from a bush, and swung it airily to hide his agitation as he advanced.

As for Evelina, when she first espied Thomas she started and half turned, as if to go back; then she held up her white-kerchiefed head with gentle

pride and kept on. When she came up to Thomas she walked so far to one side that her muslin skirt was in danger of catching and tearing on the bushes, and she never raised her eyes, and not a flicker of recognition stirred her sweet pale face as she passed him.

But Thomas started as if she had struck him, and dropped his spray of white flowers, and could not help a smothered cry that was half a sob, as he went on, knocking blindly against the bushes. He went a little way, then he stopped and looked back with his piteous hurt eyes. And Evelina had stopped also, and she had the spray of white flowers which he had dropped, in her hand, and her eyes met his. Then she let the flowers fall again, and clapped both her little hands to her face to cover it, and turned to run; but Thomas was at her side, and he put out his hand and held her softly by her white arm.

"Oh," he panted, "I — did not mean to be — too presuming, and offend you. I — crave your pardon — "

Evelina had recovered herself. She stood with her little hands clasped, and her eyes cast down before him; but not a quiver stirred her pale face, which seemed turned to marble by this last effort of her maiden pride. "I have nothing to pardon," said she. "It was I, whose bold behavior, unbecoming a modest and well-trained young woman, gave rise to what seemed like presumption on your part." The sense of justice was strong within her, but she made her speech haughtily and primly, as if she had learned it by rote from some maiden school-mistress, and pulled her arm away and turned to go; but Thomas's words stopped her.

"Not — unbecoming if it came — from the heart," said he, brokenly, scarcely daring to speak, and yet not daring to be silent.

Then Evelina turned on him, with a sudden strange pride that lay beneath all other pride, and was of a nobler and truer sort. "Do you think I would have given you the look that I did if it had not come from my heart? " she demanded. "What did you take me to be — false and a jilt? I may be a forward young woman, who has overstepped the bounds of maidenly decorum, and I shall never get over the shame of it, but I am truthful, and I am no jilt." The brilliant color flamed out on Evelina's cheeks. Her blue eyes met Thomas's with that courage of innocence and nature which dares all shame. But it was only for a second; the tears sprang into them. "I beg you to let me go home," she said, pitifully; but Thomas caught her in his arms, and pressed her troubled maiden face against his breast.

"Oh, I love you so! " he whispered — "I love you so, Evelina, and I was afraid you were angry with me for it."

"And I was afraid," she faltered, half weeping and half shrinking from him, "lest you were angry with me for betraying the state of my feelings, when you could not return them." And even then she used that gentle formality of expression with which she had been taught by her maiden pre-

ceptors to veil decorously her most ardent emotions. And, in truth, her training stood her in good stead in other ways; for she presently commanded, with that mild dignity of hers which allowed of no remonstrance, that Thomas should take away his arm from her waist, and give her no more kisses for that time.

" It is not becoming for any one," said she, " and much less for a minister of the gospel. And as for myself, I know not what Mistress Perkins would say to me. She has a mind much above me, I fear."

" Mistress Perkins is enjoying her mind in Boston," said Thomas Merriam, with the laugh of a triumphant young lover.

But Evelina did not laugh. " It might be well for both you and me if she were here," said she, seriously. However, she tempered a little her decorous following of Mistress Perkins's precepts, and she and Thomas went hand in hand up the lane and across the fields.

There was no dew that night, and the moon was full. It was after nine o'clock when Thomas left her at the gate in the fence which separated Evelina Adams's garden from the field, and watched her disappear between the flowers. The moon shone full on the garden. Evelina walked as it were over a silver dapple, which her light gown seemed to brush away and dispel for a moment. The bushes stood in sweet mysterious clumps of shadow.

Evelina had almost reached the house, and was close to the great althea bush, which cast a wide circle of shadow, when it seemed suddenly to separate and move into life.

The elder Evelina stepped out from the shadow of the bush. " Is that you, Evelina? " she said, in her soft, melancholy voice, which had in it a nervous vibration.

" Yes, Cousin Evelina."

The elder Evelina's pale face, drooped about with gray curls, had an unfamiliar, almost uncanny, look in the moonlight, and might have been the sorrowful visage of some marble nymph, lovelorn, with unceasing grace.

" Who — was with you? " she asked.

" The minister," replied young Evelina.

" Did he meet you? "

" He met me in the lane, Cousin Evelina."

" And he walked home with you across the field? "

" Yes, Cousin Evelina."

Then the two entered the house, and nothing more was said about the matter. Young Evelina and Thomas Merriam agreed that their affection was to be kept a secret for a while. " For," said young Evelina, " I cannot leave Cousin Evelina yet a while, and I cannot have her pestered with thinking about it, at least before another spring, when she has the garden fairly growing again."

" That is nearly a whole year; it is August now," said Thomas, half reproachfully, and he tightened his clasp of Evelina's slender fingers.

"I cannot help that," replied Evelina. "It is for you to show Christian patience more than I, Thomas. If you could have seen poor Cousin Evelina, as I have seen her, through the long winter days, when her garden is dead, and she has only the few plants in her window left! When she is not watering and tending them she sits all day in the window and looks out over the garden and the naked bushes and the withered flower-stalks. She used not to be so, but would read her Bible and good books, and busy herself somewhat over fine needle-work, and at one time she was compiling a little floral book, giving a list of the flowers, and poetical selections and sentiments appropriate to each. That was her pastime for three winters, and it is now nearly done; but she has given that up, and all the rest, and sits there in the window and grows older and feebler until spring. It is only I who can divert her mind, by reading aloud to her and singing; and sometimes I paint the flowers she loves the best on card-board with water-colors. I have a poor skill in it, but Cousin Evelina can tell which flower I have tried to represent, and it pleases her greatly. I have even seen her smile. No, I cannot leave her, nor even pester her with telling her before another spring, and you must wait, Thomas," said young Evelina.

And Thomas agreed, as he was likely to do to all which she proposed which touched not his own sense of right and honor. Young Evelina gave Thomas one more kiss for his earnest pleading, and that night wrote out the tale in her journal. "It may be that I overstepped the bounds of maidenly decorum," wrote Evelina, "but my heart did so entreat me," and no blame whatever did she lay upon Thomas.

Young Evelina opened her heart only to her journal, and her cousin was told nothing, and had little cause for suspicion. Thomas Merriam never came to the house to see his sweetheart; he never walked home with her from meeting. Both were anxious to avoid village gossip, until the elder Evelina could be told.

Often in the summer evenings the lovers met, and strolled hand in hand across the fields, and parted at the garden gate with the one kiss which Evelina allowed, and that was all.

Sometimes when young Evelina came in with her lover's kiss still warm upon her lips the elder Evelina looked at her wistfully, with a strange retrospective expression in her blue eyes, as if she were striving to remember something that the girl's face called to mind. And yet she could have had nothing to remember except dreams.

And once, when young Evelina sat sewing through a long summer afternoon and thinking about her lover, the elder Evelina, who was storing rose leaves mixed with sweet spices in a jar, said, suddenly, "He looks as his father used to."

Young Evelina started. "Whom do you mean, Cousin Evelina?" she asked, wonderingly; for the elder Evelina had not glanced at her, nor even seemed to address her at all.

"Nothing," said the elder Evelina, and a soft flush stole over her withered face and neck, and she sprinkled more cassia on the rose leaves in the jar.

Young Evelina said no more; but she wondered, partly because Thomas was always in her mind, and it seemed to her naturally that nearly everything must have a savor of meaning of him, if her cousin Evelina could possibly have referred to him and his likeness to his father. For it was commonly said that Thomas looked very like his father, although his figure was different. The young man was taller and more firmly built, and he had not the meek forward curve of shoulder which had grown upon his father of late years.

When the frosty nights came Thomas and Evelina could not meet and walk hand in hand over the fields behind the Squire's house, and they very seldom could speak to each other. It was nothing except a "good-day" on the street, and a stolen glance, which set them both a-trembling lest all the congregation had noticed, in the meeting-house. When the winter set fairly in they met no more, for the elder Evelina was taken ill, and her young cousin did not leave her even to go to meeting. People said they guessed it was Evelina Adams's last sickness, and they furthermore guessed that she would divide her property between her cousin Martha Loomis and her two girls and Evelina Leonard, and that Evelina would have the house as her share.

Thomas Merriam heard this last with a satisfaction which he did not try to disguise from himself, because he never dreamed of there being any selfish element in it. It was all for Evelina. Many a time he had looked about the humble house where he had been born, and where he would have to take Evelina after he had married her, and striven to see its poor features with her eyes — not with his, for which familiarity had tempered them. Often, as he sat with his parents in the old sitting-room, in which he had kept so far an unquestioning belief, as in a friend of his childhood, the scales of his own personality would fall suddenly from his eyes. Then he would see, as Evelina, the poor, worn, humble face of his home, and his heart would sink. "I don't see how I ever can bring her here," he thought. He began to save, a few cents at a time, out of his pitiful salary, to at least beautify his own chamber a little when Evelina should come. He made up his mind that she should have a little dressing-table, with an oval mirror, and a white muslin frill around it, like one he had seen in Boston. "She shall have that to sit before while she combs her hair," he thought, with defiant tenderness, when he stowed away another shilling in a little box in his trunk. It was money which he ordinarily bestowed upon foreign missions; but his Evelina had come between him and the heathen. To procure some dainty furnishings for her bridal-chamber he took away a good half of his tithes for the spread of the gospel in the dark lands. Now and then his conscience smote him, he felt shamefaced before his deacons, but

Evelina kept her first claim. He resolved that another year he would hire a piece of land, and combine farming with his ministerial work, and so try to eke out his salary, and get a little more money to beautify his poor home for his bride.

Now if Evelina Adams had come to the appointed time for the closing of her solitary life, and if her young cousin should inherit a share of her goodly property and the fine old mansion-house, all necessity for anxiety of this kind was over. Young Evelina would not need to be taken away, for the sake of her love, from all these comforts and luxuries. Thomas Merriam rejoiced innocently, without a thought for himself.

In the course of the winter he confided in his father; he couldn't keep it to himself any longer. Then there was another reason. Seeing Evelina so little made him at times almost doubt the reality of it all. There were days when he was depressed, and inclined to ask himself if he had not dreamed it. Telling somebody gave it substance.

His father listened soberly when he told him; he had grown old of late.

"Well," said he, "she 'ain't been used to living the way you have, though you have had advantages that none of your folks ever had; but if she likes you, that's all there is to it, I s'pose."

The old man sighed wearily. He sat in his arm-chair at the kitchen fireplace; his wife had gone in to one of the neighbors, and the two were alone.

"Of course," said Thomas, simply, "if Evelina Adams shouldn't live, the chances are that I shouldn't have to bring her here. She wouldn't have to give up anything on my account — you know that, father."

Then the young man started, for his father turned suddenly on him with a pale, wrathful face. "You ain't countin' on that!" he shouted. "You ain't countin' on that — a son of mine countin' on anything like that!"

Thomas colored. "Why, father," he stammered, "you don't think — you know, it's all for *her* — and they say she can't live anyway. I had never thought of such a thing before. I was wondering how I could make it comfortable for Evelina here."

But his father did not seem to listen. "Countin' on that!" he repeated. "Countin' on a poor old soul, that 'ain't ever had anything to set her heart on but a few posies, dyin' to make room for other folks to have what she's been cheated out on. Countin' on that!" The old man's voice broke into a hoarse sob; he got up, and went hurriedly out of the room.

"Why, father!" his son called after him, in alarm. He got up to follow him, but his father waved him back and shut the door hard.

"Father must be getting childish," Thomas thought, wonderingly. He did not bring up the subject to him again.

Evelina Adams died in March. One morning the bell tolled seventy long melancholy tones before people had eaten their breakfasts. They ran to their doors and counted. "It's her," they said, nodding, when they had waited a little after the seventieth stroke. Directly Mrs. Martha Loomis

and her two girls were seen hustling importantly down the road, with their shawls over their heads, to the Squire's house. " Mis' Loomis can lay her out," they said. " It ain't likely that young Evelina knows anything about such things. Guess she'll be thankful she's got somebody to call on now, if she 'ain't mixed much with the Loomises." Then they wondered when the funeral would be, and the women furbished up their black gowns and bonnets, and even in a few cases drove to the next town and borrowed from relatives; but there was a great disappointment in store for them.

Evelina Adams died on a Saturday. The next day it was announced from the pulpit that the funeral would be private, by the particular request of the deceased. Evelina Adams had carried her delicate seclusion beyond death, to the very borders of the grave. Nobody, outside the family, was bidden to the funeral, except the doctor, the minister, and the two deacons of the church. They were to be the bearers. The burial also was to be private, in the Squire's family burial-lot, at the north of the house. The bearers would carry the coffin across the yard, and there would not only be no funeral, but no funeral procession, and no hearse. " It don't seem scarcely decent," the women whispered to each other; " and more than all that, she ain't goin' to be *seen*." The deacons' wives were especially disturbed by this last, as they might otherwise have gained many interesting particulars by proxy.

Monday was the day set for the burial. Early in the morning old Thomas Merriam walked feebly up the road to the Squire's house. People noticed him as he passed. " How terribly fast he's grown old lately! " they said. He opened the gate which led into the Squire's front yard with fumbling fingers, and went up the walk to the front door, under the Corinthian pillars, and raised the brass knocker.

Evelina opened the door, and started and blushed when she saw him. She had been crying; there were red rings around her blue eyes, and her pretty lips were swollen. She tried to smile at Thomas's father, and she held out her hand with shy welcome.

" I want to see her," the old man said, abruptly.

Evelina started, and looked at him wonderingly. " I — don't believe — I know who you mean," said she. " Do you want to see Mrs. Loomis? "

" No; I want to see her."

" *Her?* "

" Yes, *her*."

Evelina turned pale as she stared at him. There was something strange about his face. " But — Cousin Evelina," she faltered — " she — didn't want — Perhaps you don't know: she left special directions that nobody was to look at her."

" I *want to see her*," said the old man, and Evelina gave way. She stood aside for him to enter, and led him into the great north parlor, where Evelina Adams lay in her mournful state. The shutters were closed, and

one on entering could distinguish nothing but that long black shadow in the middle of the room. Young Evelina opened a shutter a little way, and a slanting shaft of spring sunlight came in and shot athwart the coffin. The old man tiptoed up and leaned over and looked at the dead woman. Evelina Adams had left further instructions about her funeral, which no one understood, but which were faithfully carried out. She wished, she had said, to be attired for her long sleep in a certain rose-colored gown, laid away in rose leaves and lavender in a certain chest in a certain chamber. There were also silken hose and satin shoes with it, and these were to be put on, and a wrought lace tucker fastened with a pearl brooch.

It was the costume she had worn one Sabbath day back in her youth, when she had looked across the meeting-house and her eyes had met young Thomas Merriam's; but nobody knew nor remembered; even young Evelina thought it was simply a vagary of her dead cousin's.

" It don't seem to me decent to lay away anybody dressed so," said Mrs. Martha Loomis; " but of course last wishes must be respected."

The two Loomis girls said they were thankful nobody was to see the departed in her rose-colored shroud.

Even old Thomas Merriam, leaning over poor Evelina, cold and dead in the garb of her youth, did not remember it, and saw no meaning in it. He looked at her long. The beautiful color was all faded out of the yellow-white face; the sweet full lips were set and thin; the closed blue eyes sunken in dark hollows; the yellow hair showed a line of gray at the edge of her old woman's cap, and thin gray curls lay against the hollow cheeks. But old Thomas Merriam drew a long breath when he looked at her. It was like a gasp of admiration and wonder; a strange rapture came into his dim eyes; his lips moved as if he whispered to her, but young Evelina could not hear a sound. She watched him, half frightened, but finally he turned to her. " I 'ain't seen her — fairly," said he, hoarsely — " I 'ain't seen her, savin' a glimpse of her at the window, for over forty year, and she 'ain't changed, not a look. I'd have known her anywheres. She's the same as she was when she was a girl. It's wonderful — wonderful! "

Young Evelina shrank a little. " We think she looks natural," she said, hesitatingly.

" She looks jest as she did when she was a girl and used to come into the meetin'-house. She *is* jest the same," the old man repeated, in his eager, hoarse voice. Then he bent over the coffin, and his lips moved again. Young Evelina would have called Mrs. Loomis, for she was frightened, had he not been Thomas's father, and had it not been for her vague feeling that there might be some old story to explain this which she had never heard. " Maybe he was in love with poor Cousin Evelina, as Thomas is with me," thought young Evelina, using her own leaping-pole of love to land straight at the truth. But she never told her surmise to any one except Thomas, and that was long afterwards, when the old man was dead. Now she watched him

with her blue dilated eyes. But soon he turned away from the coffin and made his way straight out of the room, without a word. Evelina followed him through the entry and opened the outer door. He turned on the threshold and looked back at her, his face working.

"Don't ye go to lottin' too much on what ye're goin' to get through folks that have died an' not had anything," he said; and he shook his head almost fiercely at her.

"No, I won't. I don't think I understand what you mean, sir," stammered Evelina.

The old man stood looking at her a moment. Suddenly she saw the tears rolling over his old cheeks. "I'm much obliged to ye for lettin' of me see her," he said hoarsely, and crept feebly down the steps.

Evelina went back trembling to the room where her dead cousin lay, and covered her face, and closed the shutter again. Then she went about her household duties, wondering. She could not understand what it all meant; but one thing she understood — that in some way this old dead woman, Evelina Adams, had gotten immortal youth and beauty in one human heart. "She looked to him just as she did when she was a girl," Evelina kept thinking to herself with awe. She said nothing about it to Mrs. Martha Loomis or her daughters. They had been in the back part of the house, and had not heard old Thomas Merriam come in, and they never knew about it.

Mrs. Loomis and the two girls stayed in the house day and night until after the funeral. They confidently expected to live there in the future. "It isn't likely that Evelina Adams thought a young woman no older than Evelina Leonard could live here alone in this great house with nobody but that old Sarah Judd. It would not be proper nor becoming," said Martha Loomis to her two daughters; and they agreed, and brought over many of their possessions under cover of night to the Squire's house during the interval before the funeral.

But after the funeral and the reading of the will the Loomises made sundry trips after dusk back to their old home, with their best petticoats and cloaks over their arms, and their bonnets dangling by their strings at their sides. For Evelina Adams's last will and testament had been read, and therein provision was made for the continuance of the annuity heretofore paid them for their support, with the condition affixed that not one night should they spend after the reading of the will in the house known as the Squire Adams house. The annuity was an ample one, and would provide the widow Martha Loomis and her daughters, as it had done before, with all the needfuls of life; but upon hearing the will they stiffened their double chins into their kerchiefs with indignation, for they had looked for more.

Evelina Adams's will was a will of conditions, for unto it she had affixed two more, and those affected her beloved cousin Evelina Leonard. It was notable that "beloved" had not preceded her cousin Martha Loomis's name in the will. No pretence of love, when she felt none, had she ever

made in her life. The entire property of Evelina Adams, spinster, deceased, with the exception of Widow Martha Loomis's provision, fell to this beloved young Evelina Leonard, subject to two conditions — firstly, she was never to enter into matrimony, with any person whomsoever, at any time whatsoever; secondly, she was never to let the said spinster Evelina Adams's garden, situated at the rear and southward of the house known as the Squire Adams house, die through any neglect of hers. Due allowance was to be made for the dispensations of Providence: for hail and withering frost and long-continued drought, and for times wherein the said Evelina Leonard might, by reason of being confined to the house by sickness, be prevented from attending to the needs of the growing plants, and the verdict in such cases was to rest with the minister and the deacons of the church. But should this beloved Evelina love and wed, or should she let, through any wilful neglect, that garden perish in the season of flowers, all that goodly property would she forfeit to a person unknown, whose name, enclosed in a sealed envelope, was to be held meantime in the hands of the executor, who had also drawn up the will, Lawyer Joshua Lang.

There was great excitement in the village over this strange and unwonted will. Some were there who held that Evelina Adams had not been of sound mind, and it should be contested. It was even rumored that Widow Martha Loomis had visited Lawyer Joshua Lang and broached the subject, but he had dismissed the matter peremptorily by telling her that Evelina Adams, spinster, deceased, had been as much in her right mind at the time of drawing the will as anybody of his acquaintance.

"Not setting store by relations, and not wanting to have them under your roof, doesn't go far in law nor common-sense to send folks to the madhouse" old Lawyer Lang, who was famed for his sharp tongue, was reported to have said. However, Mrs. Martha Loomis was somewhat comforted by her firm belief that either her own name or that of one of her daughters was in that sealed envelope kept by Lawyer Joshua Lang in his strong-box, and by her firm purpose to watch carefully lest Evelina prove derelict in fulfilling the two conditions whereby she held the property.

Larger peep-holes were soon cut away mysteriously in the high arbor vitæ hedge, and therein were often set for a few moments, when they passed that way, the eager eyes of Mrs. Martha or her daughter Flora or Fidelia Loomis. Frequent calls they also made upon Evelina, living alone with the old woman Sarah Judd, who had been called in during her cousin's illness, and they strolled into the garden, spying anxiously for withered leaves or dry stalks. They at every opportunity interviewed the old man who assisted Evelina in her care of the garden concerning its welfare. But small progress they made with him, standing digging at the earth with his spade while they talked, as if in truth his wits had gone therein before his body and he would uncover them.

Moreover, Mrs. Martha Loomis talked much slyly to mothers of young

men, and sometimes with bold insinuations to the young men themselves, of the sad lot of poor young Evelina, condemned to a solitary and loveless life, and of her sweetness and beauty and desirability in herself, although she could not bring the Squire's money to her husband. And once, but no more than that, she touched lightly upon the subject of the young minister, Thomas Merriam, when he was making a pastoral call.

" My heart bleeds for the poor child living all alone in that great house," said she. And she looked down mournfully, and did not see how white the young minister's face turned. " It seems almost a pity," said she, furthermore — " Evelina is a good housekeeper, and has rare qualities in herself, and so many get poor wives nowadays — that some godly young man should not court her in spite of the will. I doubt, too, if she would not have a happier lot than growing old over that garden, as poor Cousin Evelina did before her, even if she has a fine house to live in, and a goodly sum in the bank. She looks pindling enough lately. I'll warrant she has lost good ten pound since poor Evelina was laid away, and " —

But Thomas Merriam cut her short. " I see no profit in discussing matters which do not concern us," said he, and only his ministerial estate saved him from the charge of impertinence.

As it was, Martha Loomis colored high. " I'll warrant he'll look out which side his bread is buttered on; ministers always do," she said to her daughters after he had gone. She never dreamed how her talk had cut him to the heart.

Had he not seen more plainly than anyone else, Sunday after Sunday, when he glanced down at her once or twice cautiously from his pulpit, how weary-looking and thin she was growing? And her bright color was well-nigh gone, and there were pitiful downward lines at the corners of her sweet mouth. Poor young Evelina was fading like one of her own flowers, as if some celestial gardener had failed in his care of her. And Thomas saw it, and in his heart of hearts he knew the reason, and yet he would not yield. Not once had he entered the old Squire's house since he attended the dead Evelina's funeral, and stood praying and eulogising, with her coffin between him and the living Evelina, with her pale face shrouded in black bombazine. He had never spoken to her since, nor entered the house; but he had written her a letter, in which all the fierce passion and anguish of his heart was cramped and held down by formal words and phrases, and poor young Evelina did not see beneath them. When her lover wrote her that he felt it inconsistent with his Christian duty and the higher aims of his existence to take any further steps towards a matrimonial alliance, she felt merely that Thomas either cared no more for her, or had come to consider, upon due reflection, that she was not fit to undertake the responsible position of a minister's wife. " It may be that in some way I failed in my attendance upon Cousin Evelina," thought poor young Evelina, " or it may be that he thinks I have not enough dignity of character to inspire respect

among the older women in the church." And sometimes, with a sharp thrust of misery that shook her out of her enforced patience and meekness, she wondered if, indeed, her own loving freedom with him had turned him against her, and led him in his later and sober judgment to consider her light-minded for a minister's wife. " It may be that I was guilty of great indecorum, and almost, indeed, forfeited my claims to respect for maidenly modesty, inasmuch as I suffered him to give me kisses, and did almost bring myself to return them in kind. But my heart did so entreat me, and in truth it seemed almost like a lack of sincerity for me to wholly withstand it," wrote poor young Evelina in her journal at that time; and she further wrote: " It is indeed hard for one who has so little knowledge to be fully certain of what is or is not becoming and a Christian duty in matters of this kind; but if I have in any manner, through my ignorance or unwarrantable affection, failed, and so lost the love and respect of a good man, and the opportunity to become his helpmeet during life, I pray that I may be forgiven — for I sinned not wilfully — that the lesson may be sanctified unto me, and that I may live as the Lord order, in Christian patience and meekness, and not repining." It never occurred to young Evelina that possibly Thomas Merriam's sense of duty might be strengthened by the loss of all her cousin's property should she marry him, and neither did she dream that he might hesitate to take her from affluence into poverty for her own sake. For herself the property, as put in the balance beside her love, was lighter than air itself. It was so light that it had no place in her consciousness. She simply had thought, upon hearing the will, of Martha Loomis and her daughters in possession of the property, and herself with Thomas, with perfect assurance and rapture.

Evelina Adams' disapprobation of her marriage, which was supposedly expressed in the will, had, indeed, without reference to the property, somewhat troubled her tender heart, but she told herself that Cousin Evelina had not known she had promised to marry Thomas; that she would not wish her to break her solemn promise. And furthermore, it seemed to her quite reasonable that the condition had been inserted in the will mainly through concern for the beloved garden.

" Cousin Evelina might have thought perhaps I would let the flowers die when I had a husband and children to take care of," said Evelina. And so she had disposed of all the considerations which had distressed her, and had thought of no others.

She did not answer Thomas's letter. It was so worded that it seemed to require no reply, and she felt that he must be sure of her acquiescence in whatever he thought best. She laid the letter away in a little rosewood box, in which she had always kept her dearest treasures since her school-days. Sometimes she took it out and read it, and it seemed to her that the pain in her heart would put an end to her in spite of all her prayers for Christian fortitude; and yet she could not help reading it again.

It was seldom that she stole a look at her old lover as he stood in the pulpit in the meeting-house, but when she did she thought with an anxious pang that he looked worn and ill, and that night she prayed that the Lord would restore his health to him for the sake of his people.

It was four months after Evelina Adams's death, and her garden was in the full glory of midsummer, when one evening, towards dusk, young Evelina went slowly down the street. She seldom walked abroad now, but kept herself almost as secluded as her cousin had done before her. But that night a great restlessness was upon her, and she put a little black silk shawl over her shoulders and went out. It was quite cool, although it was midsummer. The dusk was deepening fast; the katydids called back and forth from the wayside bushes. Evelina met nobody for some distance. Then she saw a man coming towards her, and her heart stood still, and she was about to turn back, for she thought for a minute it was the young minister. Then she saw it was his father, and she went on slowly, with her eyes downcast. When she met him she looked up and said good-evening, gravely, and would have passed on, but he stood in her way.

"I've got a word to say to ye, if ye'll listen," he said.

Evelina looked at him tremblingly. There was something strained and solemn in his manner. "I'll hear whatever you have to say, sir," she said.

The old man leaned his pale face over her and raised a shaking forefinger. "I've made up my mind to say something," said he. "I don't know as I've got any right to, and maybe my son will blame me, but I'm goin' to see that you have a chance. It's been borne in upon me that women folks don't always have a fair chance. It's jest this I'm goin' to say: I don't know whether you know how my son feels about it or not. I don't know how open he's been with you. Do you know jest why he quit you?"

Evelina shook her head. "No," she panted — "I don't — I never knew. He said it was his duty."

"Duty can get to be an idol of wood and stone, an' I don't know but Thomas's is," said the old man. "Well, I'll tell you. He don't think it's right for him to marry you, and make you leave that big house, and lose all that money. He don't care anything about it for himself, but it's for you. Did you know that?"

Evelina grasped the old man's arm hard with her little fingers.

"You don't mean that — was why he did it!" she gasped.

"Yes, that was why."

Evelina drew away from him. She was ashamed to have Thomas's father see the joy in her face. "Thank you, sir," she said. "I did not understand. I — will write to him."

"Maybe my son will think I have done wrong coming betwixt him and his idees of duty," said old Thomas Merriam, "but sometimes there's a good deal lost for lack of a word, and I wanted you to have a fair chance

an' a fair say. It's been borne in upon me that women folks don't always have it. Now you can do jest as you think best, but you must remember one thing — riches ain't all. A little likin' for you that's goin' to last, and keep honest and faithful to you as long as you live, is worth more; an' it's worth more to women folks than 't is to men, an' it's worth enough to them. My son's poorly. His mother and I are worried about him. He don't eat nor sleep — walks his chamber nights. His mother don't know what the matter is, but he let on to me some time since."

"I'll write a letter to him," gasped Evelina again. "Good-night, sir." She pulled her little black silk shawl over her head and hastened home, and all night long her candle burned, while her weary little fingers toiled over pages of foolscap-paper to convince Thomas Merriam fully, and yet in terms not exceeding maidenly reserve, that the love of his heart and the companionship of his life were worth more to her than all the silver and gold in the world. Then the next morning she despatched it, all neatly folded and sealed, and waited.

It was strange that a letter like that could not have moved Thomas Merriam, when his heart, too, pleaded with him so hard to be moved. But that might have been the very reason why he could withstand her, and why the consciousness of his own weakness gave him strength. Thomas Merriam was one, when he had once fairly laid hold of duty, to grasp it hard, although it might be to his own pain and death, and maybe to that of others. He wrote to poor young Evelina another letter, in which he emphasized and repeated his strict adherence to what he believed the line of duty in their separation, and ended it with a prayer for her welfare and happiness, in which, indeed, for a second, the passionate heart of the man showed forth. Then he locked himself in his chamber, and nobody ever knew what he suffered there. But one pang he did not suffer which Evelina would have suffered in his place. He mourned not over nor realized the grief of her tender heart when she should read his letter, otherwise he could not have sent it. He writhed under his own pain alone, and his duty hugged him hard, like the iron maiden of the old tortures, but he would not yield.

As for Evelina, when she got his letter, and had read it through, she sat still and white for a long time, and did not seem to hear when old Sarah Judd spoke to her. But at last she rose and went to her chamber, and knelt down, and prayed for a long time; and then she went out in the garden and cut all the most beautiful flowers, and tied them in wreaths and bouquets, and carried them out to the north side of the house, where her cousin Evelina was buried, and covered her grave with them. And then she knelt down there, and hid her face among them, and said, in a low voice, as if in a listening ear, "I pray you, Cousin Evelina, forgive me for what I am about to do."

And then she returned to the house, and sat at her needlework as usual;

but the old woman kept looking at her, and asking if she were sick, for there was a strange look in her face.

She and old Sarah Judd had always their tea at five o'clock, and put the candles out at nine, and this night they did as they were wont. But at one o'clock in the morning young Evelina stole softly down the stairs with her lighted candle, and passed through into the kitchen; and a half-hour after she came forth into the garden, which lay in full moonlight, and she had in her hand a steaming teakettle, and she passed around among the shrubs and watered them, and a white cloud of steam rose around them. Back and forth she went to the kitchen; for she had heated the great copper wash-kettle full of water; and she watered all the shrubs in the garden, moving amid curling white wreaths of steam, until the water was gone. And then she set to work and tore up by the roots with her little hands and trampled with her little feet all the beautiful tender flower-beds; all the time weeping, and moaning softly: "Poor Cousin Evelina! poor Cousin Evelina! Oh, forgive me, poor Cousin Evelina!"

And at dawn the garden lay in ruin, for all the tender plants she had torn up by the roots and trampled down, and all the stronger-rooted shrubs she had striven to kill with boiling water and salt.

Then Evelina went into the house, and made herself tidy as well as she could when she trembled so, and put her little shawl over her head, and went down the road to the Merriams' house. It was so early the village was scarcely astir, but there was smoke coming out of the kitchen chimney at the Merriams'; and when she knocked, Mrs. Merriam opened the door at once, and stared at her.

"Is Sarah Judd dead?" she cried; for her first thought was that something must have happened when she saw the girl standing there with her wild pale face.

"I want to see the minister," said Evelina, faintly, and she looked at Thomas's mother with piteous eyes.

"Be you sick?" asked Mrs. Merriam. She laid a hard hand on the girl's arm, and led her into the sitting-room, and put her into the rocking-chair with the feather cushion. "You look real poorly," said she. "Sha'n't I get you a little of my elderberry wine?"

"I want to see him," said Evelina, and she almost sobbed.

"I'll go right and speak to him," said Mrs. Merriam. "He's up, I guess. He gets up early to write. But hadn't I better get you something to take first? You do look sick."

But Evelina only shook her head. She had her face covered with her hands, and was weeping softly. Mrs. Merriam left the room, with a long backward glance at her. Presently the door opened and Thomas came in. Evelina stood up before him. Her pale face was all wet with tears, but there was an air of strange triumph about her.

"The garden is dead," said she.

"What do you mean?" he cried out, staring at her, for indeed he thought for a minute that her wits had left her.

"The garden is dead," said she. "Last night I watered the roses with boiling water and salt, and I pulled the other flowers up by their roots. The garden is dead, and I have lost all Cousin Evelina's money, and it need not come between us any longer." She said that, and looked up in his face with her blue eyes, through which the love of the whole race of loving women from which she had sprung, as well as her own, seemed to look, and held out her little hands; but even then Thomas Merriam could not understand, and stood looking at her.

"Why — did you do it?" he stammered.

"Because you would have me no other way, and — I couldn't bear that anything like that should come between us," she said, and her voice shook like a harp-string, and her pale face went red, then pale again.

But Thomas still stood staring at her. Then her heart failed her. She thought that he did not care, and she had been mistaken. She felt as if it were the hour of her death, and turned to go. And then he caught her in his arms.

"Oh," he cried, with a great sob, "the Lord make me worthy of thee, Evelina!"

There had never been so much excitement in the village as when the fact of the ruined garden came to light. Flora Loomis, peeping through the hedge on her way to the store, had spied it first. Then she had run home for her mother, who had in turn sought Lawyer Lang, panting bonnetless down the road. But before the lawyer had started for the scene of disaster, the minister, Thomas Merriam, had appeared, and asked for a word in private with him. Nobody ever knew just what that word was, but the lawyer was singularly uncommunicative and reticent as to the ruined garden.

"Do you think the young woman is out of her mind?" one of the deacons asked him, in a whisper.

"I wish all the young women were as much in their minds; we'd have a better world," said the lawyer, gruffly.

"When do you think we can begin to move in here?" asked Mrs. Martha Loomis, her wide skirts sweeping a bed of uprooted verbenas.

"When your claim is established," returned the lawyer, shortly, and turned on his heel and went away, his dry old face scanning the ground like a dog on a scent. That afternoon he opened the sealed document in the presence of witnesses, and the name of the heir to whom the property fell was disclosed. It was "Thomas Merriam, the beloved and esteemed minister of this parish," and young Evelina would gain her wealth instead of losing it by her marriage. And furthermore, after the declaration of the name of the heir was this added: "This do I in the hope and belief that neither the greed of riches nor the fear of them shall prevent that which

is good and wise in the sight of the Lord, and with the surety that a love which shall triumph over so much in its way shall endure, and shall be a blessing and not a curse to my beloved cousin, Evelina Leonard."

Thomas Merriam and Evelina were married before the leaves fell in that same year, by the minister of the next village, who rode over in his chaise, and brought his wife, who was also a bride, and wore her wedding-dress of a pink and pearl shot silk. But young Evelina wore the blue bridal array which had been worn by old Squire Adams's bride, all remodelled daintily to suit the fashion of the times; and as she moved, the fragrances of roses and lavender of the old summers during which it had been laid away were evident, like sweet memories.

JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER

(1882–)

JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER has attempted in such works as the tale that follows to reconstruct the life and atmosphere of the early days in Pennsylvania, especially among the pioneers who established the industries that have since developed parts of the State from a wilderness into a vast network of steel furnaces. Nothing he has written is more definitely characteristic than *Tubal Cain.*

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TUBAL CAIN

I

ALEXANDER HULINGS sat at the dingy, green-baize covered table, with one slight knee hung loosely over the other, and his tenuous fingers lightly gripping the time-polished wooden arms of a hickory chair. He was staring somberly, with an immobile, thin, dark countenance, at the white plaster wall before him. Close by his right shoulder a window opened on a tranquil street, where the vermilion maple buds were splitting; and beyond the window a door was ajar on a plank sidewalk. Some shelves held crumbling yellow calf-bound volumes, a few new, with glazed black labels; at the back was a small cannon stove, with an elbow of pipe let into the plaster; a large steel engraving of Chief Justice Marshall hung on the wall; and in a farther corner a careless pile of paper, folded in dockets or tied with casual string, was collecting a grey film of neglect. A small banjo clock, with a brass-railed pediment and an elongated picture in color of the Exchange at Manchester, traced the regular, monotonous passage of minutes into hour.

The hour extended, doubled; but Alexander Hulings barely shifted a knee, a hand. At times a slight convulsive shudder passed through his shoulders, but without affecting his position or the concentrated gloom. Occasionally he swallowed dryly; his grip momentarily tightened on the chair, but his gaze was level. The afternoon waned; a sweet breath of flowering magnolia drifted in at the door; the light grew tender; and foot-

falls without sounded far away. Suddenly Hulings moved: his chair scraped harshly over the bare floor and he strode abruptly outside, where he stood facing a small tin sign nailed near the door. It read:

ALEXANDER HULINGS
COUNSELOR AT LAW

With a violent gesture, unpremeditated even by himself, he forced his hand under an edge of the sign and ripped it from its place. Then he went back and flung it bitterly, with a crumpling impact, away from him, and resumed his place at the table.

It was the end of that! He had practiced law seven, nine, years, detesting its circuitous trivialities, uniformly failing to establish a professional success, without realizing his utter legal unfitness. Before him on a scrap of paper were the figures of his past year's activities. He had made something over nine hundred dollars. And he was thirty-four years old! Those facts, seen together, dinned failure in his brain. There were absolutely no indications of a brighter future. Two other actualities added to the gloom of his thoughts: one was Hallie Flower; that would have to be encountered at once, this evening; and the other was — his health.

He was reluctant to admit any question of the latter; he had the feeling, almost a superstition, that such an admission enlarged whatever, if anything, was the matter with him. It was vague, but increasingly disturbing; he had described it with difficulty to Doctor Veneada, his only intimate among the Eastlake men, as a sensation like that a fiddlestring might experience when tightened remorselessly by a blundering hand.

"At any minute," he had said, "the damned thing must go!"

Veneada had frowned out of his whiskers.

"What you need," the doctor had decided, "is a complete change. You are strung up. Go away. Forget the law for two or three months. The Mineral is the place for you."

Alexander Hulings couldn't afford a month or more at the Mineral Spring; and he had said so with the sharpness that was one of the annoying symptoms of his condition. He had had several letters, though, throughout a number of years, from James Claypole, a cousin of his mother, asking him out to Tubal Cain, the iron forge which barely kept Claypole alive; and he might manage that — if it were not for Hallie Flower. There the conversation had come to an inevitable conclusion.

Now, in a flurry of violence that was, nevertheless, the expression of complete purpose, he had ended his practice, his only livelihood; and that would — must — end Hallie.

He had been engaged to her from the day when, together, they had, with a pretense of formality, opened his office in Eastlake. He had determined not to marry until he made a thousand dollars in a year; and, as year after

year slipped by without his accumulating that amount, their engagement had come to resemble the unemotional contact of a union without sex. Lately Hallie had seemed almost content with duties in her parental home and the three evenings weekly that Alexander spent with her in the formal propriety of a front room.

His own feelings defied analysis; but it seemed to him that, frankly surveyed, even his love for Hallie Flower had been swallowed up in the tide of irritability rising about him. He felt no active sorrow at the knowledge that he was about to relinquish all claim upon her; his pride stirred resentfully; the evening promised to be uncomfortable — but that was all.

The room swam about him in a manner that had grown hatefully familiar; he swayed in his chair; and his hands were at once numb with cold and wet with perspiration. A sinking fear fastened on him, an inchoate dread that he fought bitterly. It wasn't death from which Alexander Hulings shuddered, but a crawling sensation that turned his knees to dust. He was a slight man, with narrow shoulders and close-swinging arms, but as rigidly erect as an iron bar; his mentality was like that too, and he particularly detested the variety of nerves that had settled on him.

A form blocked the doorway, accentuating the dusk that had swiftly gathered in the office, and Veneada entered. His neckcloth was, as always, carelessly folded, and his collar hid in rolls of fat; a cloak was thrown back from a wide girth, and he wore an incongruous pair of buff linen trousers.

"What's this — mooning in the dark?" he demanded. "Thought you hadn't locked the office door. Come out; fill your lungs with the spring and your stomach with supper."

Without reply, Alexander Hulings followed the other into the street.

"I am going to Hallie's," he said in response to Veneada's unspoken query.

Suddenly he felt that he must conclude everything at once and get away; where and from what he didn't know. It was not his evening to see Hallie and she would be surprised when he came up on the step. The Flowers had supper at five; it would be over now, and Hallie finished with the dishes and free. Alexander briefly told Veneada his double decision.

"In a way," the other said, "I'm glad. You must get away for a little anyway; and you are accomplishing nothing here in Eastlake. You are a rotten lawyer, Alexander; any other man would have quit long ago; but your infernal stubbornness held you to it. You are not a small-town man. You see life in a different, a wider way. And if you could only come on something where your pig-headedness counted there's no saying where you'd reach. I'm sorry for Hallie; she's a nice woman, and you could get along well enough on nine hundred ——"

"I said I'd never marry until I made a thousand in a year," Hulings broke in, exasperated.

"Good heavens! Don't I know that?" Veneada replied. "And you

won't, you — you mule! I guess I've suffered enough from your confounded character to know what it means when you say a thing. I think you're right about this. Go up to that fellow Claypole and show him what brittle stuff iron is compared to yourself. Seriously, Alex, get out and work like the devil at a heavy job; go to bed with your back ruined and your hands raw. You know I'll miss you — means a lot to me, best friend."

A deep embarrassment was visible on Veneada; it was communicated to Alexander Hulings, and he was relieved when they drew opposite the Flowers' dwelling.

It was a narrow, high brick structure, with a portico cap, supported by cast-iron grilling, and shallow iron-railed balconies on the second story. A gravel path divided a small lawn beyond a gate guarded by two stone greyhounds. Hallie emerged from the house with an expression of mild inquiry at his unexpected appearance. She was a year older than himself, an erect, thin woman, with a pale coloring and unstirred blue eyes.

"Why, Alex," she remarked, "whatever brought you here on a Saturday?" They sat, without further immediate speech, from long habit, in familiar chairs.

He wondered how he was going to tell her. And the question, the difficulty, roused in him an astonishing amount of exasperation. He regarded her almost vindictively, with covertly shut hands. He must get hold of himself. Hallie, to whom he was about to do irreparable harm, the kindest woman in existence! But he realized that whatever feeling he had had for her was gone for ever; she had become merged indistinguishably into the thought of Eastlake; and every nerve in him demanded a total separation from the slumberous town that had witnessed his legal failure.

He wasn't, he knew, normal; his intention here was reprehensible, but he was without will to defeat it. Alexander Hulings felt the clumsy hand drawing tighter the string he had pictured himself as being; an overwhelming impulse overtook him to rush away — anywhere, immediately. He said in a rapid blurred voice:

"Hallie, this . . . our plans are a failure. That is, I am. The law's been no good; I mean, I haven't. Can't get the hand of the — the damned ——"

"Alex!" she interrupted, astonished at the expletive.

"I'm going away," he gabbled on, only half conscious of his words in waves of giddy insecurity. "Yes; for good. I'm no use here! Shot to pieces, somehow. Forgive me. Can't get a thousand."

Hallie Flower said in a tone of unpremeditated surprise:

"Then I'll never be married!"

She sat with her hands open in her lap, a wistfulness on her countenance that he found only silly. He cursed himself, his impotence, bitterly. Now he wanted to get away; but there remained an almost more impossible consummation — Hallie's parents. They were old; she was an only child.

"Your father ——" he muttered.

On his feet he swayed like a pendulum. Vise-like fingers gripped at the back of his neck. The hand of death? Incredibly he lived through a stammering, racking period, in the midst of which a cuckoo ejaculated seven idiotic notes from the fretted face of a clock.

He was on the street again; the cruel pressure was relaxed; he drew a deep breath. In his room, a select chamber with a "private" family, he packed and strapped his small leather trunk. There was nowhere among his belongings a suggestion of any souvenir of the past, anything sentimental or charged with memory. A daguerreotype of Hallie Flower, in an embossed black case lined with red plush, he ground into a shapeless fragment. Afterward he was shocked by what he had done and was forced to seek the support of a chair. He clenched his jaw, gazed with stony eyes against the formless dread about him.

He had forgotten that the next day was Sunday, with a corresponding dislocation of the train and packet service which was to take him West. A further wait until Monday was necessary. Alexander Hulings got through that too; and was finally seated with Veneada in his light wagon, behind a clattering pair of young Hambletonians, with the trunk secured in the rear. Veneada was taking him to a station on the Columbus Railroad. Though the morning had hardly advanced, and Hulings had wrapped himself in a heavy cape, the doctor had only a duster, unbuttoned, on his casual clothing.

"You know, Alex," the latter said — "and let me finish before you start to object — that I have more money than I can use. And, though I know you wouldn't just borrow any for cigars, if there ever comes a time when you need a few thousands, if you happen on something that looks good for both of us, don't fail to let me know. You'll pull out of this depression; I think you're a great man, Alex — because you are so unpleasant, if for nothing else."

The doctor's weighty hand fell affectionately on Hulings' shoulder.

Hulings involuntarily moved from the other's contact; he wanted to leave all — all of Eastlake. Once away, he was certain, his being would clarify, grow more secure. He even neglected to issue a characteristic abrupt refusal of Veneada's implied offer of assistance; though all that he possessed, now strapped in his wallet, was a meager provision for a debilitated man who had cast safety behind him.

The doctor pulled his horses in beside a small, boxlike station, on flat wooden tracks, dominated by a stout pole, to which was nailed a ladderlike succession of cross blocks.

Alexander Hulings was infinitely relieved when the other, after some last professional injunctions, drove away. Already, he thought, he felt better; and he watched, with a faint stirring of normal curiosity, the station master climb the pole and survey the mid-distance for the approaching train.

The engine finally rolled fussily into view, with a lurid black column of smoke pouring from a thin belled stack, and dragging a rocking, precarious brigade of chariot coaches scrolled in bright yellow and staring blue. It stopped, with a fretful ringing and grinding impact of coach on coach. Alexander Hulings' trunk was shouldered to a roof; and after an inspection of the close interiors he followed his baggage to an open seat above. The engine gathered momentum; he was jerked rudely forward and blinded by a cloud of smoke streaked with flaring cinders.

There was a faint cry at his back, and he saw a woman clutching a charring hole in her crinoline. The railroad journey was an insuperable torment; the diminishing crash at the stops, either at a station or where cut wood was stacked to fire the engine, the choking hot waves of smoke, the shouted confabulations between the captain and the engineer, forward on his precarious ledge — all added to an excruciating torture of Hulings', racked and shuddering nerves. His rigid body was thrown from side to side; his spine seemed at the point of splintering from the pounding of the rails.

An utter mental dejection weighed down his shattered being; it was not the past but the future that oppressed him. Perhaps he was going only to die miserably in an obscure hole; Veneada probably wouldn't tell him the truth about his condition. What he most resented, with a tenuous spark of his customary obstinate spirit, was the thought of never justifying a belief he possessed in his ultimate power to conquer circumstance, to be greatly successful.

Veneada, a man without flattery, had himself used that word "great" in connection with him.

Alexander Hulings felt dimly, even now, a sense of cold power; a hunger for struggle different from a petty law practice in Eastlake. He thought of the iron that James Claypole unsuccessfully wrought; and something in the word, its implied obduracy, fired his disintegrating mind. "Iron!" Unconsciously he spoke the word aloud. He was entirely ignorant of what, exactly, it meant, what were the processes of its fluxing and refinement; forge and furnace were hardly separated in his thoughts. But out of the confusion emerged the one concrete stubborn fact — iron!

He was drawn, at last, over a level grassy plain, at the far edge of which evening and clustered houses merged on a silver expanse of river. It was Columbus, where he found the canal packets lying in the terminal-station basin.

II

The westbound packet, the *Hit or Miss,* started with a long horn blast and the straining of the mules at the towrope. The canal boat slipped into its placid banked waterway. Supper was being laid in the gentlemen's cabin, and Alexander Hulings was unable to secure a berth. The passen-

gers crowded at a single long table; and the low interior, steaming with food, echoing with clattering china and a ceaseless gabble of voices, confused him intolerably. He made his way to the open space at the rear. The soundless, placid movement at once soothed him and was exasperating in its slowness. He thought of his journey as an escape, an emergence from a suffocating cloud; and he raged at its deliberation.

The echoing note of a *cornet-à-piston* sounded from the deck above; it was joined by the rattle of a drum; and an energetic band swept into the strains of Zip Coon. The passengers emerged from supper and gathered on the main deck; the gayly lighted windows streamed in moving yellow bars over dark banks and fields; and they were raised or lowered on the pouring black tide of masoned locks. If it had not been for the infernal persistence of the band, Alexander Hulings would have been almost comfortable; but the music, at midnight, showed no signs of abating. Money was collected, whisky distributed; a quadrille formed forward. Hulings could see the women's crinolines, the great sleeves and skirts, dipping and floating in a radiance of oil torches. He had a place in a solid bank of chairs about the outer rail, and sat huddled in his cape. His misery, as usual, increased with the night; the darkness was streaked with immaterial flashes, disjointed visions. He was infinitely weary, and faint from a hunger that he yet could not satisfy. A consequential male at his side, past middle age, with close whiskers and a mob of seals, addressed a commonplace to him; but he made no reply. The other regarded Hulings with an arrogant surprise, then turned a negligent back. From beyond came a clear, derisive peal of girlish laughter. He heard a name — Gisela — pronounced.

Alexander Hulings' erratic thoughts returned to iron. He wondered vaguely why James Claypole had never succeeded with Tubal Cain. Probably, like so many others, he was a drunkard. The man who had addressed him moved away — he was accompanied by a small party — and another took his vacant place.

"See who that was?" he asked Hulings. The latter shook his head morosely. "Well, that," the first continued impressively, "is John Wooddrop."

Alexander Hulings had an uncertain memory of the name, connected with —

"Yes, sir — John Wooddrop, the Ironmaster. I reckon that man is the biggest — not only the richest but the biggest — man in the state. Thousands of acres, mile after mile; iron banks and furnaces and forges and mills; hundreds of men and women . . . all his. Like a European monarch! Yes, sir; resembles that. Word's law — says 'Come here!' or 'Go there!' His daughter is with him too, it's clear she's got the old boy's spirit, and his lady. They get off at Harmony; own the valley; own everything about."

Harmony was the place where Hulings was to leave the canal; from

there he must drive to Tubal Cain. The vicarious boastfulness of his neighbor stirred within him an inchoate antagonism.

" There is one place near by he doesn't own," he stated sharply.

" Then it's no good," the other promptly replied. " If it was, Wooddrop would have it. It would be his or nothing — he'd see to that. His name is Me, or nobody."

Alexander Hulings' antagonism increased and illogically fastened on the Ironmaster. The other's character, as it had been stated, was precisely the quality that called to the surface his own stubborn will of self-assertion. It precipitated a condition in which he expanded, grew determined, ruthless, cold.

He imagined himself, sick and almost moneyless and bound for Claypole's failure, opposed to John Wooddrop, and got a faint thrill from the fantastic vision. He had a recurrence of the conviction that he, too, was a strong man; and it tormented him with the bitter contrast between such an image and his actual present self. He laughed aloud, a thin, shaken giggle, at his belief persisting in the face of such irrefutable proof of his failure. Nevertheless, it was firmly lodged in him, like a thorn pricking at his dissolution, gathering his scattered faculties into efforts of angry contempt at the laudation of others.

Veneada and Hallie Flower, he realized, were the only intimates he had gathered in a solitary and largely embittered existence. He had no instinctive humanity of feeling, and his observations, colored by his spleen, had not added to a small opinion of man at large. Always feeling himself to be a figure of supreme importance, he had never ceased to chafe at the small aspect he was obliged to exhibit. This mood had grown, through an uncomfortable sense of shame, to a perpetual disparagement of all other triumph and success.

Finally the band ceased its efforts, the oil lights burned dim, and a movement to the cabins proceeded, leaving him on a deserted deck. At last, utterly exhausted, he went below in search of a berth. They hung four deep about the walls, partly curtained, while the floor of the cabin was filled with clothesracks, burdened with a miscellany of outer garments. One place only was empty — under the ceiling; and he made a difficult ascent to the narrow space. Sleep was an impossibility — a storm of hoarse breathing, muttering, and sleepy oaths dinned on his ears. The cabin, closed against the outer air, grew indescribably polluted. Any former torment of mind and body was minor compared to the dragging wakeful hours that followed; a dread of actual insanity seized him.

Almost at the first trace of dawn the cabin was awakened and filled with fragmentary dressing. The deck and bar were occupied by men waiting for the appearance of the feminine passengers from their cabin forward, and breakfast. The day was warm and fine. The packet crossed a turgid river, at the mouths of other canal routes, and entered a wide pastoral valley.

Alexander Hulings sat facing a smaller, various river; at his back was a barrier of mountains, glossy with early laurel and rhododendron. His face was yellow and sunken, and his lips dry. John Wooddrop passed and repassed him, a girl, his daughter Gisela, on his arm. She wore an India muslin dress, wide with crinoline, embroidered in flowers of blue and green worsted, and a flapping rice-straw hat draped in blond lace. Her face was pointed and alert.

Once Hulings caught her glance, and he saw that her eyes seemed black and — and — impertinent.

An air of palpable satisfaction emanated from the Ironmaster. His eyes were dark too; and, more than impertinent, they held for Hulings an intolerable patronage. John Wooddrop's foot trod the deck with a solid authority that increased the sick man's smoldering scorn. At dinner he had an actual encounter with the other. The table was filling rapidly; Alexander Hulings had taken a place when Wooddrop entered with his group and surveyed the seats that remained.

"I am going to ask you," he addressed Hulings in a deep voice, "to move over yonder. That will allow my family to surround me."

A sudden unreasonable determination not to move seized Hulings. He said nothing; he didn't turn his head nor disturb his position. John Wooddrop repeated his request in still more vibrant tones. Hulings did nothing. He was held in a silent rigidity of position.

"You, sir," Wooddrop pronounced loudly, "are deficient in the ordinary courtesies of travel! And note this, Mrs. Wooddrop" — he turned to his wife — "I shall never again, in spite of Gisela's importunities, move by public conveyance. The presence of individuals like this ——"

Alexander Hulings rose and faced the older, infinitely more important man. His sunken eyes blazed with such a feverish passion that the other raised an involuntary palm.

"Individuals," he added, "painfully afflicted."

Suddenly Hulings' weakness betrayed him; he collapsed in his chair with a pounding heart and blurred vision. The incident receded, became merged in the resumption of the commonplace clatter of dinner.

Once more on deck, Alexander Hulings was aware that he had appeared both inconsequential and ridiculous, two qualities supremely detestable to his pride; and this added to his bitterness toward the Ironmaster. He determined to extract satisfaction for his humiliation. It was characteristic of Hulings that he saw himself essentially as John Wooddrop's equal; worldly circumstance had no power to impress him; he was superior to the slightest trace of the complacent inferiority exhibited by last night's casual informer.

The day waned monotonously; half dazed with weariness he heard bursts of music; far, meaningless voices; the blowing of the packet horn. He didn't go down again into the cabin to sleep, but stayed wrapped in his

cloak in a chair. He slept through the dawn and woke only at the full activity of breakfast. Past noon the boat tied up at Harmony. The Wooddrops departed with all the circumstance of worldly importance and in the stir of cracking whip and restive, spirited horses, Alexander Hulings moved unobserved, with his trunk, to the bank.

Tubal Cain, he discovered, was still fifteen miles distant, and — he had not told James Claypole of his intended arrival — no conveyance was near by. A wagon drawn by six mules with gay bells and colored streamers and heavily loaded with limestone finally appeared, going north, on which Hulings secured passage.

The precarious road followed a wooded ridge, with a vigorous stream on the right and a wall of hills beyond. The valley was largely uninhabited. Once they passed a solid, foursquare structure of stone, built against a hill, with clustered wooden sheds and a great wheel revolving under a smooth arc of water. A delicate white vapor trailed from the top of the masonry, accompanied by rapid, clear flames.

" Blue Lump Furnace," the wagon driver briefly volunteered. " Belongs to Wooddrop. But that doesn't signify anything about here. Pretty near everything's his."

Alexander Hulings looked back, with an involuntary deep interest in the furnace. The word " iron " again vibrated, almost clanged, through his mind. It temporarily obliterated the fact that here was another evidence of the magnitude, the possessions, of John Wooddrop. He was consumed by a sudden anxiety to see James Claypole's forge. Why hadn't the fool persisted, succeeded?

" Tubal Cain's in there." The mules were stopped. " What there is of it! Four bits will be enough."

He was left beside his trunk on the roadside, clouded by the dust of the wagon's departure. Behind him, in the direction indicated, the ground, covered with underbrush, fell away to a glint of water and some obscure structures. Dragging his baggage he made his way down to a long wooden shed, the length facing him open on two covered hearths, some dilapidated troughs, a suspended ponderous hammer resting on an anvil, and a miscellaneous heap of rusting iron implements — long-jawed tongs, hooked rods, sledges, and broken castings. The hearths were cold; there was not a stir of life, of activity, anywhere.

Hulings left his trunk in a clearing and explored farther. Beyond a black heap of charcoal, standing among trees, were two or three small stone dwellings. The first was apparently empty, with some whitened sacks on a bare floor; but within a second he saw through the open doorway the lank figure of a man kneeling in prayer. His foot was on the sill; but the bowed figure, turned away, remained motionless.

Alexander Hulings hesitated, waiting for the prayer to reach a speedy termination. But the other, with upraised, quivering hands, remained so

long on his knees that Hulings swung the door back impatiently. Even then an appreciable time elapsed before the man inside rose to his feet. He turned and moved forward, with an abstracted gaze in pale-blue eyes set in a face seamed and scored by time and disease. His expression was benevolent; his voice warm and cordial.

" I am Alexander Hulings," that individual briefly stated; " and I suppose you're Claypole."

The latter's condition, he thought instantaneously, was entirely described by his appearance. James Claypole's person was as neglected as the forge. His stained breeches were engulfed in scarred leather boots, and a coarse black shirt was open on a gaunt chest.

His welcome left nothing to be desired. The dwelling into which he conducted Hulings consisted of a single room, with a small shed kitchen at the rear and two narrow chambers above. There was a pleasant absence of apology for the meager accommodations. James Claypole was an entirely unaffected and simple host.

The late April evening was warm; and after a supper, prepared by Claypole, of thick bacon, potatoes and saleratus biscuit, the two men sat against the outer wall of the house. On the left Hulings could see the end of the forge shed, with the inevitable water wheel hung in a channel cut from the clear stream. The stream wrinkled and whispered along spongy banks, and a flicker hammered on a resonant limb. Hulings stated negligently that he had arrived on the same packet with John Wooddrop, and Claypole retorted:

" A man lost in the world! I tried to wrestle with his spirit, but it was harder than the walls of Jericho."

His eyes glowed with fervor. Hulings regarded him curiously. A religious fanatic! He asked:

" What's been the trouble with Tubal Cain? Other forges appear to flourish about here. This Wooddrop seems to have built a big thing with iron."

" Mammon! " Claypole stated. " Slag; dross! not this, but the Eternal World." The other failed to comprehend, and he said so irritably. " All that," Claypole specified, waving toward the forge, " takes the thoughts from the Supreme Being. Eager for the Word, and a poor speller-out of the Book, you can't spend priceless hours shingling blooms. And then the men left, one after another, because I stopped pandering to their carnal appetites. No one can indulge in rum here, in a place of mine sealed to God."

" Do you mean that whisky was a part of their pay and that you held it back? " Alexander Hulings demanded curtly. He was without the faintest sympathy for what he termed such arrant folly.

" Yes, just that; a brawling, forward crew. Wooddrop wanted to buy, but I wouldn't extend his wicked dominion, satisfy fleshly lust."

" It's a good forge, then? "

"None better! I built her mostly myself, when I was laying up the treasure that rusted; stone on stone, log on log. Heavy, slow work. The sluice is like a city wall; the anvil bedded on seven feet of oak. It's right! But if I'd known then I should have put up a temple to Jehovah."

Hulings could scarcely contain his impatience.

"Why," he ejaculated, "you might have made a fine thing out of it! Opportunity, opportunity, and you let it go by. For sheer —— "

He broke off at a steady gaze from Claypole's calm blue eyes. It was evident that he would have to restrain any injudicious characterizations of the other's belief. He spoke suddenly:

"I came up here because I was sick and had to get out of Eastlake. I left everything but what little money I had. You see — I was a failure. I'd like to stay with you a while; when perhaps I might get on my feet again. I feel easier than I have for weeks." He realized, surprised, that this was so. He had a conviction that he could sleep here, by the stream, in the still, flowering woods. "I haven't any interest in temples," he continued; "but I guess — two men — we won't argue about that. Some allowance on both sides. But I am interested in iron; I'd like to know this forge of yours backward. I've discovered a sort of hankering after the idea; just that — iron. It's a tremendous fact, and you can keep it from rusting."

III

The following morning Claypole showed Alexander Hulings the mechanics of Tubal Cain. A faint reminiscent pride shone through the later unworldly preoccupation. He lifted the sluice gate, and the water poured through the masoned channel of the forebay and set in motion the wheel, hung with its lower paddles in the course. In the forge shed Claypole bound a connection, and the short haft of the trip hammer, caught in revolving cogs, raised a ponderous head and dropped it, with a jarring clang, on the anvil. The blast of the hearths was driven by water wind, propelled by a piston in a wood cylinder, with an air chamber for even pressure. It was all so elemental that the neglect of the last years had but spread over the forge an appearance of ill repair. Actually it was as sound as the clear oak largely used in its construction.

James Claypole's interest soon faded; he returned to his chair by the door of the dwelling, where he laboriously spelled out the periods of a battered copy of Addison's "Evidences of the Christian Religion." He broke the perusal with frequent ecstatic ejaculations; and when Hulings reluctantly returned from his study of the forge the other was again on his knees, lost in passionate prayer. Hulings grew hungry — Claypole was utterly lost in visions — cooked some bacon and found cold biscuit in the shedlike kitchen.

The afternoon passed into a tenderly fragrant twilight. The forge re-

treated, apparently through the trees, into the evening. Alexander Hulings sat regarding it with an increasing impatience; first, it annoyed him to see such a potentiality of power lying fallow, and then his annoyance ripened into an impatience with Claypole that he could scarcely contain. The impracticable ass! It was a crime to keep the wheel stationary, the hearths cold.

He had a sudden burning desire to see Tubal Cain stirring with life; to hear the beat of the hammer forging iron; to see the dark, still interior lurid with fire. He thought again of John Wooddrop, and his instinctive disparagement of the accomplishments of others mocked both them and himself. If he, Alexander Hulings, had had Claypole's chance, his beginning, he would be more powerful than Wooddrop now.

The law was a trivial foolery compared to the fashioning, out of the earth itself, of iron. Iron, the indispensable! Railroads, in spite of the popular, vulgar disbelief, were a coming great factor; a thousand new uses, refinements, improved processes of manufacture were bound to develop. His thoughts took fire and swept over him in a conflagration of enthusiasm. By heaven, if Claypole had failed he would succeed. He, too, would be an Ironmaster!

A brutal chill overtook him with the night; he shook pitiably; dark fears crept like noxious beetles among his thoughts. James Claypole sat, with his hands on his gaunt knees, gazing, it might be, at a miraculous golden city beyond the black curtain of the world. Later Hulings lay on a couch of boards, folded in coarse blankets and his cape, fighting the familiar evil sinking of his oppressed spirit. He was again cold and yet drenched with sweat . . . if he were defeated now, he thought, if he collapsed, he was done, shattered! And in his swirling mental anguish he clung to one stable, cool fact; he saw, like Claypole, a vision; but not gold — great shadowy masses of iron. Before dawn the dread receded; he fell asleep.

He questioned his companion at breakfast about the details of forging.

"The secret," the latter stated, "is — timber; wood, charcoal. It's bound to turn up; fuel famine will come, unless it is provided against. That's where John Wooddrop's light. He counts on getting it as he goes. A furnace'll burn five or six thousand cords of wood every little while, and that means two hundred or more acres. Back of Harmony, here, are miles of timber the old man won't loose up right for. He calculates no one else can profit with them and takes his own time."

"What does Wooddrop own in the valleys?"

"Well — there's Sally Furnace; the Poole Sawmill tract; the Medlar Forge and Blue Lump; the coal holes on Allan Mountain; Marta Furnace and Reeba Furnace — they ain't right hereabouts; the Lode Orebank; the Blossom Furnace and Charming Forges; Middle and Low Green Forges; the Auspacher Farm ——"

"That will do," Hulings interrupted him moodily; "I'm not an assessor."

Envy lashed his determination to surprising heights. Claypole grew uncommunicative, except for vague references to the Kingdom at hand and the dross of carnal desire. Finally, without a preparatory word, he strode away and disappeared over the rise toward the road. At supper he had not returned; there was no trace of him when, inundated with sleep, Hulings shut the dwelling for the night. All the following day Alexander Hulings expected his host; he spent the hours avidly studying the implements of forging; but the other did not appear. Neither did he the next day, nor the next.

Hulings, surprisingly happy, was entirely alone but for the hidden passage of wagons on the road and the multitudinous birds that inhabited the stream's edge, in the peaceful, increasing warmth of the days and nights. His condition slowly improved. He bought supplies at the packet station on the canal and shortly became as proficient at the stove as James Claypole. Through the day he sat in the mild sunlight or speculated among the implements of the forge. He visualized the process of iron making; the rough pigs, there were sows, too, he had gathered, lying outside the shed had come from the furnace. These were put into the hearths and melted, stirred perhaps; then — what were the wooden troughs for? — hammered, wrought on the anvil. Outside were other irregularly round pieces of iron, palpably closer in texture than the pig. The forging of them, he was certain, had been completed. There were, also, heavy bars, three feet in length, squared at each end.

Everything had been dropped apparently at the moment of James Claypole's absorbing view of another, transcending existence. Late in an afternoon — it was May — he heard footfalls descending from the road; with a sharp, unreasoning regret, he thought the other had returned. But it was a short, ungainly man with a purplish face and impressive shoulders. "Where's Jim?" he asked with a markedly German accent.

Alexander Hulings told him who he was and all he knew about Claypole.

"I'm Conrad Wishon," the newcomer stated, sinking heavily into a chair. "Did Jim speak of me — his head forgeman? No! But I guess he told you how he stopped the schnapps. Ha! James got religion. And he went away two weeks ago? Maybe he'll never be back. This" — he waved toward the forge — "means nothing to him."

"I live twenty miles up the road, and I saw a Glory-wagon coming on — an old Conestoga, with the Bible painted on the canvas, a traveling Shouter slapping the reins, and a congregation of his family staring out the back. James would take up with a thing like that in a shot. Yes, sir; maybe now you will never see him again. And your mother's cousin! There's no other kin I've heard of; and I was with him longer than the rest."

Hulings listened with growing interest to the equable flow of Conrad Wishon's statements and mild surprise.

"Things have been bad with me," the smith continued. "My wife, she

died Thursday before breakfast, and one thing and another. A son has charge of a coaling gang on Allen Mountain, but I'm too heavy for that; and I was going down to Green Forge when I thought I'd stop and see Jim. But, hell! — Jim's gone; like as not on the Glory-wagon. I can get a place at any hearth," he declared pridefully. "I'm a good forger; none better in Hamilton County. When it's shingling a loop I can show 'em all!"

"Have some supper," Alexander Hulings offered.

They sat late into the mild night, with the moonlight patterned like a grey carpet at their feet, talking about the smithing of iron. Conrad Wishon revealed the practical grasp of a life capably spent at a single task, and Hulings questioned him with an increasing comprehension.

"If you had money," Wishon explained, "we could do something right here. I'd like to work old Tubal Cain. I understand her."

The other asked: "How much would it take?"

Conrad Wishon spread out his hands hopelessly. "A lot; and then a creekful back of that! Soon as Wooddrop heard the hammer trip, he'd be around to close you down. Do it in a hundred ways — no teaming principally."

Hulings' antagonism to John Wooddrop increased perceptibly; he became obsessed by the fantastic thought of founding himself — Tubal Cain — triumphantly in the face of the established opposition. But he had nothing — no money, knowledge, or even a robust person. Yet his will to succeed in the valleys hardened into a concrete aim. . . . Conrad Wishon would be invaluable.

The latter stayed through the night and even lingered, after breakfast, into the morning. He was reluctant to leave the familiar scene of long toil. They were sitting lost in discussion when the beat of horses' hoofs was arrested on the road, and a snapping of underbrush announced the appearance of a young man with a keen, authoritative countenance.

"Mr. James Claypole?" he asked, addressing them collectively.

Alexander Hulings explained what he could of Claypole's absence.

"It probably doesn't matter," the other returned. "I was told the forge wasn't run, for some foolishness or other." He turned to go.

"What did you want with him — with Tubal Cain?" Conrad Wishon asked.

"Twenty-five tons of blooms."

"Now if this was ten years back ——"

The young man interrupted the smith, with a gesture of impatience, and turned to go. Hulings asked Conrad Wishon swiftly:

"Could it be done here? Could the men be got? And what would it cost?"

"It could," said Wishon; "they might, and a thousand dollars would perhaps see it through."

Hulings sharply called the retreating figure back. " Something more about this twenty-five tons," he demanded.

" For the Penn Rolling Mills," the other crisply replied. " We're asking for delivery in five weeks, but that might be extended a little — at, of course, a loss on the ton. The quality must be first grade."

Wishon grunted.

" Young man," he said, " blooms I made would hardly need blistering to be called steel."

" I'm Philip Grere," the newcomer stated, " of Grere Brothers, and they're the Penn Rolling Mills. We want good blooms soon as possible and it seems there's almost none loose. If you can talk iron, immediate iron, let's get it on paper; if not, I have a long way to drive."

When he had gone Conrad Wishon sat staring, with mingled astonishment and admiration, at Hulings.

" But," he protested, " you don't know nothing about it! "

" You do! " Alexander Hulings told him; he saw himself as a mind, of which Wishon formed the trained and powerful body.

" Perhaps Jim will come back," the elder man continued.

" That is a possibility," Alexander admitted. " But I am going to put every dollar I own into the chance of finishing those twenty-five tons."

The smith persisted: " But you don't know me; perhaps I'm a rascal and can't tell a puddling furnace from a chafery."

Hulings regarded him shrewdly.

" Conrad," he demanded, " can Tubal Cain do it? "

" By *Gott*," Wishon exclaimed, " she can! "

After an hour of close calculation Conrad Wishon rose with surprising agility.

" I've got enough to do besides sitting here. Tubal Cain ought to have twenty men, anyhow; perhaps I can get eight. There's Mathias Slough, a good hammerman. He broke an elbow at Charming, and Wooddrop won't have him back; but he can work still. Hance, a good nigger, is at my place, and there is another — Surrie. Haines Zerbey, too, worked at refining, but you'll need to watch his rum. Perhaps Old Man Boeshore will lend a hand, and he's got a strapping grandson — Emanuel. Jeremiah Stell doesn't know much, but he'd let you cut a finger off for a dollar." He shook his head gravely. " That is a middling poor collection."

Alexander Hulings felt capable of operating Tubal Cain successfully with a shift of blind paralytics. A conviction of power, of vast capability, possessed him. Suddenly he seemed to have become a part of the world that moved, of its creative energy; he was like a piece of machinery newly connected with the forceful driving whole. Conrad Wishon had promised to return the next day with the men he had enumerated, and Alexander opened the small scattered buildings about the forge. There were, he found, suffi-

cient living provisions for eight or ten men out of a moldering quantity of primitive bed furnishings, rusted tin, and cracked glass. But it was fortunate that the days were steadily growing warmer.

Wishon had directed him to clean out the channel of the forebay, and throughout the latter half of the day he was tearing heavy weeds from the interstices of the stones, laboring in a chill slime that soon completely covered him. He removed heavy rocks, matted dead bushes, banked mud; and after an hour he was cruelly, impossibly weary. He slipped and bruised a shoulder, cut open his cheek; but he impatiently spat out the blood trailing into his mouth, and continued working. His weariness became a hell of acute pain; without manual practice his movements were clumsy; he wasted what strength he had. Yet as his suffering increased he grew only more relentlessly methodical in the execution of his task. He picked out insignificant obstructions, scraped away grass that offered no resistance to the water power. When he had finished, the forebay, striking in at an angle from the stream to the wheel, was meticulously clean.

He stumbled into his dwelling and fell on the bed, almost instantly asleep, without removing a garment, caked with filth; and never stirred until the sun again flooded the room. He cooked and ravenously ate a tremendous breakfast, and then forced himself to walk the dusty miles that lay between Tubal Cain and the canal. His legs seemed to be totally without joints, and his spine felt like a white-hot bar. At the store about which the insignificant village of Harmony clustered he ordered and paid for a great box of supplies, later carried by an obliging teamster and himself to the forge.

Once more there, he addressed himself to digging out the slag that had hardened in the hearths. The lightest bar soon became insuperably ponderous; it wabbled in his grasp, evaded his purpose. Vicious tears streamed over his blackened countenance, and he maintained a constant audible flow of bitter invective. But even that arduous task was nearly accomplished when dark overtook him.

He stripped off his garments, dropping them where he stood, by the forge shed, and literally fell forward into the stream. The cold shock largely revived him, and he supped on huge tins of coffee and hard flitch. Immediately after, he dropped asleep as if he had been knocked unconscious by a club.

At mid-morning he heard a rattle of conveyance from the road and his name called. Above he found a wagon, without a top, filled with the sorriest collection of humanity he had ever viewed, and drawn by a dejected bony horse and a small wicked mule.

"Here they are," Conrad Wishon announced; "and Hance brought along his girl to cook."

Mathias Slough, the hammerman, was thin and grey, as if his face were covered with cobwebs; Hance, Conrad's nigger, black as an iron

bloom, was carrying upside down a squawking hen; Surrie, lighter, had a dropped jaw and hands that hung below his knees; Haines Zerbey had pale, swimming eyes, and executed a salute with a battered flat beaver hat; Old Man Boeshore resembled a basin, bowed in at the stomach, his mouth sunken on toothless gums, but there was agility in his step; and Emanuel, his grandson, a towering hulk of youth, presented a facial expanse of mingled pimples and down. Jeremiah Stell was a small, shriveled man, with dead-white hair on a smooth, pinkish countenance.

Standing aside from the nondescript assemblage of men and transient garments, Alexander Hulings surveyed them with cold determination; two emotions possessed him — one of an almost humorous dismay at the slack figures on whom so much depended; and a second, stronger conviction that he could force his purpose even from them. They were, in a manner, his first command; his first material from which to build the consequence, the success, that he felt was his true expression.

He addressed a few brief periods to them; and there was no warmth, no effort to conciliate, in his tones, his dry statement of a heavy task for a merely adequate gain. He adopted this attitude instinctively, without forethought; he was dimly conscious, as a principle, that underpaid men were more easily driven than those over-fully rewarded. And he intended to drive the men before him to the limit of their capability. They had no individual existence for Alexander Hulings, no humanity; they were merely the implements of a projection of his own; their names — Haines Zerbey, Slough — had no more significance than the terms bellows or tongs.

They scattered to the few habitations by the stream, structures mostly of logs and plaster; and in a little while there rose the odorous smoke and sputtering fat of Hance's girl's cooking. Conrad Wishon soon started the labor of preparing the forge. Jeremiah Stell, who had some slight knowledge of carpentry, was directed to repair the plunger of the water-wind apparatus. Slough was testing the beat and control of the trip hammer. Hance and Surrie carried outside the neglected heaps of iron hooks and tongs. Conrad explained to Alexander Hulings:

"I sent word to my son about the charcoal; he'll leave it at my place, but we shall have to haul it from there. Need another mule — maybe two. There's enough pig here to start, and my idea is to buy all we will need now at Blue Lump; they'll lend us a sled, so's we will have it in case old Wooddrop tries to clamp down on us. I'll go along this afternoon and see the head furnace man. It will take money."

Without hesitation, Hulings put a considerable part of his entire small capital into the other's hand. At suppertime Conrad Wishon returned with the first load of metal for the Penn Rolling Mills contract.

Later Hance produced a wheezing accordion and, rocking on his feet, drew out long, wailing notes. He sang:

" Brothers, let us leave
Bukra Land for Hayti;
There we be receive'
Grand as Lafayette."

" With changes of men," Conrad continued to Alexander Hulings, " the forges could run night and day, like customary. But with only one lot we'll have to sleep. Someone will stay up to tend the fires."

In the morning the labor of making the wrought blooms actually commenced. Conrad Wishon and Hance at one hearth, and Haines Zerbey with Surrie at the other, stood ceaselessly stirring, with long iron rods, the fluxing metal at the incandescent cores of the fires. Alexander then saw that the troughs of water were to cool the rapidly heating rods. Conrad Wishon was relentless in his insistence on long working of the iron. There were, already, muttered protests. " The dam' stuff was cooked an hour back! " But he drowned the objections in a surprising torrent of German-American cursing.

Hulings was outside the shed when he heard the first dull fall of the hammer; and it seemed to him that the sound had come from a sudden pounding of his expanded heart. He, Alexander Hulings, was making iron; his determination, his capability and will were hammering out of the stubborn raw material of earth a foothold for himself and a justification! The smoke, pouring blackly, streaked with crimson sparks, from the forge shed, sifted a fine soot on the green-white flowers of a dogwood tree. A metallic clamor rose; and Emanuel, the youth, stripped to the waist and already smeared with sweat and grime, came out for a gulping breath of unsullied air.

The characteristics of the small force soon became evident. Conrad Wishon labored ceaselessly, with an unimpaired power at fifty apparent even to Alexander's intense self-absorption. Of the others, Hance, the negro, was easily the superior; his strength was Herculean, his willingness inexhaustible. Surrie was sullen. Mathias Slough constantly grumbled at the meager provisions for his comfort and efforts; yet he was a skillful workman. When Alexander had correctly gauged Zerbey's daily dram he, too, was useful; but the others were negligible. They made the motions of labor, but force was absent.

Alexander Hulings watched with narrowed eyes. When he was present the work in the shed notably improved; all the men except Conrad avoided his implacable gaze. He rarely addressed a remark to them; he seemed withdrawn from the operation that held so much for him. Conrad Wishon easily established his dexterity at " shingling a loop."

Working off a part of a melting sow, he secured it with wide-jawed shingling tongs; and, steadying the pulsating mass on an iron plate, he sledged it into a bloom. For ten hours daily the work continued, the

hearths burned, the trip hammer fell and fell. The interior of the shed was a grimy shadow lighted with lurid flares and rose and gentian flowers of iron. Ruddy reflections slid over glistening shoulders and intent, bitter faces; harsh directions, voices, sounded like the grating of castings.

The oddly assorted team was dispatched for charcoal, and then sent with a load of blooms to the canal. Hance had to be spared, with Surrie, for that; the forge was short of labor, and Alexander Hulings joined Conrad in the working of the metal. It was, he found, exhausting toil. He was light and unskilled, and the mass on the hearth slipped continually from his stirring; or else it fastened, with a seeming spite, on his rod, and he was powerless to move it. Often he swung from his feet, straining in supreme, wrenching effort. His body burned with fatigue, his eyes were scorched by the heat of the fires; he lost count of days and nights. They merged imperceptibly one into another; he must have dreamed of his racking exertions, for apparently they never ceased.

Alexander became indistinguishable from the others; all cleanness was forgotten; he ate in a stupefaction of weariness, securing with his fingers whatever was put before him. He was engaged in a struggle the end of which was hidden in the black smoke perpetually hanging over him; in the torment of the present, an inhuman suffering to which he was bound by a tyrannical power outside his control, he lost all consciousness of the future.

The hammerman's injured arm prevented his working for two days, and Alexander Hulings cursed him in a stammering rage, before which the other was shocked and dumb. He drove Old Man Boeshore and his grandson with consideration for neither age nor youth; the elder complained endlessly, tears even slid over his corrugated face; the youth was brutally burned, but Hulings never relaxed his demands.

It was as if they had all been caught in a whirlpool, in which they fought vainly for release — the whirlpool of Alexander Hulings' domination. They whispered together, he heard fragments of intended revolt; but under his cold gaze, his thin, tight lips, they subsided uneasily. It was patent that they were abjectly afraid of him. . . . The blooms moved in a small but unbroken stream over the road to the canal.

He had neglected to secure other horses or mules; and, while waiting for a load of iron on the rough track broken from the road to the forge, the horse slid to his knees, fell over, dead — the last ounce of effort wrung from his angular frame. The mule, with his ears perpetually laid back and a raised lip, seemed impervious to fatigue; his spirit, his wickedness, persisted in the face of appalling toil. The animal's name, Hulings knew, was Alexander; he overheard Hance explaining this to Old Man Boeshore:

"That mule's bound to be Alexander; ain't nobody but an Alexander work like that mule! He's bad too; he'd lay you cold and go right on about his business."

Old Man Boeshore muttered something excessively bitter about the name Alexander.

" If you sh'd ask me," he stated, " I'd tell you that he ain't human. He's got a red light in his eye, like —— "

Hulings gathered that this was not still directed at the mule.

More than half of the order for the Penn Rolling Mills had been executed and lay piled by the canal. He calculated the probable time still required, the amount he would unavoidably lose through the delay of faulty equipment and insufficient labor. If James Claypole came back now, he thought, and attempted interference, he would commit murder. It was evening, and he was seated listlessly, with his chair tipped back against the dwelling he shared with Conrad Wishon. The latter, close by, was bowed forward, his head, with a silvery gleam of faded hair, sunk on his breast. A catbird was whistling an elaborate and poignant song, and the invisible stream passed with a faint, choked whisper.

" We're going to have trouble with that girl of Hance's," Wishon pronounced suddenly; " she has taken to meeting Surrie in the woods. If Hance comes on them there will be wet knives! "

Such mishaps, Alexander Hulings knew, were an acute menace to his success. The crippling or loss of Hance might easily prove fatal to his hopes; the negro, immensely powerful, equable, and willing, was of paramount importance.

" I'll stop that! " he declared. But the trouble developed before he had time to intervene.

He came on the two negroes the following morning, facing each other, with, as Conrad had predicted, drawn knives. Hance stood still; but Surrie, with bent knees and the point of his steel almost brushing the grass, moved about the larger man. Hulings at once threw himself between them.

" What damned nonsense's this? " he demanded. " Get back to the team, Hance, and you, Surrie, drop your knife! "

The former was on the point of obeying, when Surrie ran in with a sweeping hand. Alexander Hulings jumped forward in a cold fury and felt a sudden numbing slice across his cheek. He had a dim consciousness of blood smearing his shoulder; but all his energy was directed on the stooped figure falling away from his glittering rage.

" Get out! " he directed in a thin, evil voice. " If you are round here in ten minutes I'll blow a hole through your skull! "

Surrie was immediately absorbed by the underbrush.

Hulings had a long diagonal cut from his brow across and under his ear. It bled profusely, and as his temper receded faintness dimmed his vision. Conrad Wishon blotted the wound with cobwebs; a cloth, soon stained, was bound about Alexander's head, and after dinner he was again in the forge, whipping the flagging efforts of his men with a voice like a thin leather thong. If the labor were delayed, he recognized, the contract would not be

filled. The workmen were wearing out, like the horse. He moved young Emanuel to the hauling with Hance, the wagon now drawn by three mules. The hammerman's injured arm had grown inflamed, and he was practically one-handed in his management of the trip hammer.

While carrying a lump of iron to the anvil the staggering, ill-assorted group with the tongs dropped their burden, and stood gazing stupidly at the fallen, glowing mass. They were hardly revived by Hulings' lashing scorn. He had increased Haines Zerbey's daily dram, but the drunkard was now practically useless. Jeremiah Stell contracted an intermittent fever; and, though he still toiled in the pursuit of his coveted wage, he was of doubtful value.

Alexander Hulings' body had become as hard as Conrad's knotted forearm. He ate huge amounts of half-cooked pork, washed hastily down by tin cups of black coffee, and fell into instant slumber when the slightest opportunity offered. His face was matted by an unkempt beard; his hands, the pale hands of an Eastlake lawyer, were black, like Hance's, with palms of leather. He surveyed himself with curious amusement in a broken fragment of looking-glass nailed to the wall; the old Hulings, pursued by inchoate dread, had vanished. . . . In his place was Alexander Hulings, a practical iron man! He repeated the descriptive phrase aloud, with an accent of arrogant pride. Later, with an envelope from the Penn Rolling Mills, he said it again, with even more confidence; he held the pay for the blooms which he had — it seemed in another existence — promised to deliver.

He stood leaning on a tree before the forge; within, Conrad Wishon and Hance were piling the metal hooks with sharp, ringing echoes. All the others had vanished magically, at once, as if from an exhausted spell. Old Man Boeshore had departed with a piping implication, supported by Emanuel, his grandson.

Alexander Hulings was reviewing his material situation. It was three hundred and thirty dollars better than it had been on his arrival at Tubal Cain. In addition to that he had a new store of confidence, of indomitable pride, vanity, a more actual support. He gazed with interest toward the near future, and with no little doubt. It was patent that he could not proceed as he had begun; such combinations could not be forced a second time. He intended to remain at James Claypole's forge, conducting it as though it were his own — for the present, anyhow — but he should have to get an efficient working body; and many additions were necessary — among them a blacksmith shop. He had, with Conrad Wishon, the conviction that Claypole would not return.

More capital would be necessary. He was revolving this undeniable fact when, through the lush June foliage, he saw an open carriage turn from the road and descend to the forge clearing. It held an erect, trimly whiskered form and a negro driver. The former was John Wooddrop. He gazed with surprise, that increased to a recognition, a memory, of Alexander Hulings.

" Jim Claypole? " he queried.

" Not here," Hulings replied, even more laconically.

" Nonsense! I'm told he's been running Tubal Cain again. Say to him — and I've no time to dawdle — that John Wooddrop's here."

" Well, Claypole's not," the other repeated. " He's away. I'm running this forge — Alexander Hulings."

Wooddrop's mouth drew into a straight hard line from precise whisker to whisker. " I have been absent," he said finally. It was palpably an explanation, almost an excuse. Conrad Wishon appeared from within the forge shed. " Ah, Conrad! " John Wooddrop ejaculated pleasantly. " Glad to find you at the hearth again. Come and see me in the morning."

" I think I'll stay here," the forgeman replied, " now Tubal Cain's working."

" Then, in a week or so," the Ironmaster answered imperturbably.

All Alexander Hulings' immaterial dislike of Wooddrop solidified into a concrete, vindictive enmity. He saw the beginning of a long, bitter, stirring struggle.

IV

" That's about it! " Conrad Wishon affirmed. They were seated by the doorway of the dwelling at Tubal Cain. It was night, and hot; and the heavy air was constantly fretted by distant, vague thunder. Alexander Hulings listened with pinched lips.

" I saw Derek, the founder at Blue Lump, and ordered the metal; then he told me that Wooddrop had sent word not to sell a pig outside his own forges. That comes near closing us up. I misdoubt that we could get men, anyhow — not without we went to Pittsburgh; and that would need big orders, big money. The old man's got us kind of shut in here, with only three mules and one wagon — we couldn't make out to haul any distance; and John Wooddrop picks up all the loose teams. It looks bad, that's what it does. No credit, too; I stopped at Harmony for some forge hooks, and they wouldn't let me take them away until you had paid. A word's been dropped there likewise."

Hulings could see, without obvious statement, that his position was difficult; it was impossible seemingly, with his limited funds and equipment, to go forward and — no backward course existed: nothing but a void, ruin, the way across which had been destroyed. He turned with an involuntary dread from the fleeting contemplation of the past, mingled with monotony and suffering, and set all his cold, passionate mind on the problem of his future. He would, he told himself, succeed with iron here. He would succeed in spite of John Wooddrop — no, because of the Ironmaster; the latter increasingly served as an actual object of comparison, an incentive, and a deeply involved spectator.

He lost himself in a gratifying vision, when Conrad's voice, shattering

the facile heights he had mounted, again fastened his attention on the exigencies of the present.

"A lot of money!" the other repeated. "I guess we'll have to shut down; but I'd almost rather drive mules on the canal than go to John Wooddrop."

Hulings declared: "You'll do neither, and Tubal Cain won't shut down!" He rose, turned into the house.

"What's up?" Wishon demanded at the sudden movement.

"I'm going after money," Hulings responded from within — "enough. A packet is due east before dawn."

If the canal boat had seemed to go slowly on his way to Harmony, it appeared scarcely to stir on his return. There was no immediate train connection at Columbus, and he footed the uneven shaded walks in an endless pattern, unconscious of houses, trees, or passing people, lost in the rehearsal of what he had to say, until the horn of an immediate departure summoned him to a seat in a coach.

The candles at each end sent a shifting, pale illumination over the cramped interior, voluminous skirts and prodigiously whiskered countenances. Each delay increased his impatience to a muttering fury; it irked him that he was unable to declare himself, Alexander Hulings, to the train captain, and by the sheer bulk of that name force a more rapid progress.

Finally in Eastlake, Veneada gazed at him out of a silent astonishment.

"You say you're Alex Hulings!" the doctor exclaimed. "Some of you seems to be; but the rest is — by heaven, iron! I'll admit now I was low about you when you left, in April; I knew you had gimp, and counted on it; however ——" The period expired in a wondering exhalation. Veneada pounded on his friend's chest, dug into his arm. "A horse!" he declared.

Alexander Hulings impatiently withdrew from the other's touch.

"Veneada," he said, "once you asked me to come to you if I wanted money, if I happened on a good thing. I said nothing at the time, because I couldn't picture an occasion when I'd do such a thing. Well — it's come. I need money, and I'm asking you for it. And, I warn you, it will be a big sum. If you can't manage it, I must go somewhere else; I'd go to China, if necessary — I'd stop people, strangers, on the street.

"A big sum," Hulings reiterated somberly; "perhaps ten, perhaps twenty, thousand. Not a loan," he added immediately, "but an investment — an investment in me. You must come out to Harmony. I can't explain: it wouldn't sound convincing in Eastlake. In the valleys, at Tubal Cain, the thing will be self-evident. I have made a beginning with practically nothing; and I can go on. But it will require capital, miles of forest, furnaces built, Pittsburgh swept bare of good men. No," he held up a hardened, arresting palm, "don't attempt to discuss it now. Come out to Tubal Cain and see; learn about John Wooddrop and how to turn iron into specie."

At the end of the week there were three chairs canted against the stone wall of the little house by the stream that drove Tubal Cain Forge. Conrad Wishon, with a scarlet undershirt open on a broad, hairy chest, listened with wonderment to the sharp periods of Alexander Hulings and Veneada; incredulously he heard mammoth sums of money estimated, projected, dismissed as commonplace. Veneada said:

" I've always believed in your ability, Alex; all that I questioned was the opportunity. Now that has gone; the chance is here. You've got those steel-wire fingers of yours about something rich, and you will never let go. It sounds absurd to go up against this Wooddrop, a despot and a firmly established power; anyone might well laugh at me, but I feel a little sorry for the older man. He doesn't know you.

" You haven't got insides, sympathies, weaknesses, like the others of us; the thing is missing in you that ordinarily betrays human men into slips; yes — compassion. You are not pretty to think about, Alex; but I suppose power never really is. You know I've got money and you know, too, that you can have it. As safe with you as in a bank vault! "

" We'll go back to Eastlake tomorrow," Hulings decided, " lay out our plans, and draw up papers. We'll buy the loose timber quietly through agents; I'll never appear in any of it. After that we can let out the contracts for two furnaces. I don't know anything about them now; but I shall in a week. Wishon had better live on here, pottering about the forge, until he can be sent to Pittsburgh after workmen. His pay will start tomorrow."

" What about Tubal Cain, and that fellow — what's his name? "

" Claypole, James. I'll keep a record of what his forge makes, along with mine, and bank it. Common safety. Then I must get over to New York, see the market there, men. I have had letters from an anchor foundry in Philadelphia. There are nail factories, locomotive shops, stove plate, to furnish. A hundred industries. I'll have them here in time — rolling mills you will hear back in the mountains. People on the packets will see the smoke of my furnaces — Alexander Hulings' iron! "

" You might furnish me with a pass, so that I could occasionally walk through and admire," Veneada said dryly.

Hulings never heard him.

" I'll have a mansion," he added abstractedly, " better than Wooddrop's, with more rooms —— "

" All full, I suppose, of little glorious Hulingses! " the doctor interrupted.

Alexander regarded him unmoved. His thoughts suddenly returned to Hallie Flower. He saw her pale, strained face, her clasped hands; he heard the thin echo of her mingled patience and dismay: " Then I'll never be married! " There was no answering stir of regret, remorse; she slipped for ever out of his consciousness, as if she had been a shadow vanishing before a flood of hard, white light.

V

GREATLY to Alexander Hulings' relief, Doctor Veneada never considered the possibility of a partnership; it was as far from one man's wish, for totally different reasons, as from the other's.

"No, no, Alex," he declared; "I couldn't manage it. Some day, when you were out of the office, the widow or orphan would come in with the foreclosure, and I would tear up the papers. Seriously, I won't do — I'm fat and easy and lazy. My money would be safer with me carefully removed from the scene."

In the end Alexander protected Veneada with mortgages on the timber and land he secured about Harmony through various agents and under different names. Some of the properties he bought outright, but in the majority he merely purchased options on the timber. His holdings in the latter finally extended in a broad, irregular belt about the extended local industries of John Wooddrop. It would be impossible for the latter, when, in perhaps fifteen years, he had exhausted his present forests, to cut an acre of wood within practicable hauling distance. This accomplished, a momentary grim satisfaction was visible on Hulings' somber countenance.

He had, however, spent all the money furnished by Doctor Veneada, without setting the foundations of the furnaces and forges he had projected, and he decided not to go to his friend for more. There were two other possible sources of supply: allied iron industries — the obvious recourse — and the railroads. The latter seemed precarious; everywhere people, and even print, were ridiculing the final usefulness of steam traffic; it was judged unfit for heavy and continuous hauling — a toy of inventors and fantastic dreaming; canals were the obviously solid means of transportation. But Alexander Hulings became fanatical overnight in his belief in the coming empire of steam.

With a small carpetbag, holding his various deeds and options, and mentally formulating a vigorous expression of his opinions and projections, he sought the doubting capital behind the Columbus Transportation Line. When, a month later, he returned to Tubal Cain, it was in the company of an expert industrial engineer, and with credit sufficient for the completion of his present plans. He had been gone a month, but he appeared older by several years. Alexander Hulings had forced from reluctant sources, from men more wily, if less adamantine, than himself, what he desired; but in return he had been obliged to grant almost impossibly favorable contracts and preferences. A tremendous pressure of responsibility had gathered about him; but under it he was still erect, coldly confident, and carried himself with the special pugnacity of small, vain men.

On a day in early June, a year from the delivery of his first contract at Tubal Cain, he stood in a fine rain at the side of a light road wagon, drawn, like John Wooddrop's, by two sweeping young horses, held by a negro, and

watched the final courses of his new furnace. The furnace itself, a solid structure of unmasoned stone, rose above thirty feet, narrowed at the top almost to half the width of its base. Directly against its face and hearth was built the single high interior of the cast house, into which the metal would be run on a sand pig bed to harden into commercial iron.

On the hill rising abruptly at the back was the long wall of the coal house, with an entrance and runway leading to the opening at the top of the furnace stack. Lower down, the curving artificial channel of the forebay swept to where the water would fall on a ponderous overshot wheel and drive the great tilted bellows that blasted the furnace.

The latter, Alexander knew, must have a name. Most furnaces were called after favorite women; but there were no such sentimental objects in his existence. He recalled the name of the canal packet that had first drawn him out to Harmony — the *Hit or Miss*. No casual title such as that would fit an enterprise of his. He thought of Tubal Cain, and then of Jim Claypole. He owed the latter something; and yet he wouldn't have another man's name. . . . Conrad Wishon had surmised that the owner of Tubal Cain had vanished — like Elijah — on a Glory-wagon. That was it — Glory Furnace! He turned and saw John Wooddrop leaning forward out of his equipage, keenly studying the new buildings.

" That's a good job," the Ironmaster allowed; " but it should be, built by Henry Bayard, the first man in the country. It ought to do very well for five or six years."

" Fifty," Hulings corrected him.

John Wooddrop's eyes were smiling.

" It's all a question of charcoal," he explained, as Wishon had, long before. " To be frank, I expect a little difficulty myself, later. It is surprising how generally properties have been newly bought in the county. I know, because lately I, too, have been reaching out. Practically all the available stuff has been secured. Thousands of acres above you, here, have been taken by a company, hotel — or something of the sort."

" The Venealic Company," Hulings said; and then, in swelling pride, he added: " That's me! " Wooddrop's gaze hardened. Alexander Hulings thought the other's face grew paler. His importance, his sense of accomplishment, of vindication, completely overwhelmed him. " And beyond, it is me! " he cried. " And back of that, again! " He made a wide, sweeping gesture with his arm. " Over there; the Hezekiah Mills tract — that's me too; and the East purchase, and on and round. Fifty! This Glory Furnace, and ten others, could run on for a century.

" You've been the big thing here — even in the state. You are known on canal boats, people point you out; yes, and patronize me. You did that yourself — you and your women. But it is over; I'm coming now, and John Wooddrop's going. You are going with those same canal boats, and Alexander Hulings is rising with the railroads."

He pounded himself on the chest, and then suddenly stopped. It was the only impassioned speech, even in the disastrous pursuit of the law, that he had ever made; and it had an impotent, foolish ring in his ear, his deliberate brain. He instantly disowned all that part of him which had betrayed his ordinary silent caution into such windy boasting. Hulings was momentarily abashed before the steady scrutiny of John Wooddrop.

"When I first saw you," the latter pronounced, "I concluded that you were unbalanced. Now I think that you are a maniac!"

He spoke curtly to his driver, and was sharply whirled away through the grey-green veil of rain and foliage. Hulings was left with an aggravated discontent and bitterness toward the older man, who seemed to have the ability always to place him in an unfavorable light.

VI

Doctor Veneada returned for the first run of metal from Glory Furnace; there were two representatives of the other capital invested, and, with Alexander Hulings, Conrad Wishon, and some local spectators, they stood in the gloom of the cast house waiting for the founder to tap the clay sealing of the hearth. Suddenly there was a rush of crackling white light, pouring sparks, and the boiling liquid flooded out, rapidly filling the molds radiating from the channels stamped in the sand bed. The incandescent iron flushed from silver to darker, warmer tones.

A corresponding warmth ran through Alexander Hulings' body; Glory Furnace was his; it had been conceived by him and his determination had brought it to an actuality. He would show Wooddrop a new type of "maniac." This was the second successful step in his move against the Ironmaster, in the latter's own field. Then he realized that he, too, might now be called Ironmaster. He directed extensive works operated under his name; he, Hulings, was the head! Already there were more than a hundred men to do what he directed, go where he wished. The feeling of power, of consequence, quickened through him. Alexander held himself, if possible, more rigidly than before; he followed every minute turn of the casting, tersely admonishing a laborer.

He was dressed with the utmost care; a marked niceness of apparel now distinguished him. His whiskers were closely trimmed, his hair brushed high under a glossy tile hat; he wore checked trousers, strapped on glazed Wellington boots, a broadcloth coat, fitted closely to his waist, with a deep rolling collar; severe neckcloth, and a number of seals on a stiff twill waistcoat. Veneada, as always, was carelessly garbed in wrinkled silk and a broad planter's hat. It seemed to Alexander that the other looked conspicuously older than he had only a few months back; the doctor's face was pendulous, the porches beneath his eyes livid.

Alexander Hulings quickly forgot this in the immediate pressure of

manufacture. The younger Wishon, who had followed his father into Alexander's service, now came down from the charcoal stacks in a great sectional wagon drawn by six mules, collared in bells and red streamers. The pigs were sledged in endless procession from Glory, and then from a second furnace, to the forges that reached along the creek in each direction from Tubal Cain. The latter was worked as vigorously as possible, but Alexander conducted its finances in a separate, private column; all the profit he banked to the credit of James Claypole. He did this not from a sense of equity, but because of a deeper, more obscure feeling, almost a superstition, that such acknowledgment of the absent man's unwitting assistance was a safeguard of further good fortune.

The months fled with amazing rapidity; it seemed to him that one day the ground was shrouded in snow, and on the next the dogwood was blooming. No man in all his properties worked harder or through longer hours than Alexander; the night shift at a forge would often see him standing grimly in the lurid reflections of the hearths; charcoal burners, eating their flitch and potatoes on an out-lying mountain, not infrequently heard the beat of his horse's hoofs on the soft moss, his domineering voice bullying them for some slight oversight. He inspired everywhere a dread mingled with grudging admiration; it was known that he forced every possible ounce of effort from workman and beast.

Nevertheless, toward the end of the third summer of his success he contracted a lingering fever, and he was positively commanded to leave his labors for a rest and change. Wrapped in a shawl, he sat on the porch of the house he had commenced building, on a rise overlooking the eddying smoke of his industries, and considered the various places that offered relaxation; he could go to the sea, at Long Branch, or to Saratoga, the gayety and prodigality of which were famous. . . . But his thought returned to his collapse four years before; he heard Veneada counseling him to take the water of the Mineral Springs. He had been too poor then for the Mineral; had he gone there, he would have arrived unnoticed. By heaven, he would go there now! It was, he knew, less fashionable than the other places; its day had been twenty, thirty years before. But it represented once more his progress, his success; and, in the company of his personal servant, his leather boxes strapped at the back of his lightest road wagon, he set out the following morning.

Almost sixty miles of indifferent roads lay before him; and, though he covered, in his weakened condition, far more than half the distance by evening, he was forced to stay overnight at a roadside tavern. The way was wild and led through narrow, dark valleys, under the shadow of uninhabited ridges, and through swift fords. Occasionally he passed great, slow Conestoga wagons, entrained for the West; leather-hooded, ancient vehicles; and men on horses.

The wagon broke suddenly into the smooth, green valley that held the

Mineral Springs. Against a western mountain were grouped hotels; a bridge, crossing a limpid stream; pointed kiosks in the Chinese taste; and red gravel walks. The hotel before which Alexander stopped — a prodigiously long, high structure painted white — had a deep porch across its face with slender columns towering up unbroken to the roof and festooned with trumpet flowers. A bell rang loudly for dinner; and there was a colorful flow of crinoline over the porch, a perfumed flowery stir, through which he impatiently made his way, followed by negro boys with his luggage.

Within, the office was high and bare, with a sweeping staircase, and wide doors opened on a lofty thronged dining room. Above, he was led through interminable narrow corridors, past multitudinous closed doors, to a closet-like room completely filled by a narrow bed, a chair, and a corner washstand; this, with some pegs in the calcined wall and a bell rope, completed the provisions for his comfort. His toilet was hurried, for he had been warned that extreme promptness at meals was more than desirable; and, again below, he was led by a pompous negro between long, crowded tables to a place at the farther end. The din of conversation and clatter of dishes were deafening. In the ceiling great connected fans were languidly pulled by black boys, making a doubtful circulation.

His dinner was cold and absurdly inadequate, but the table claret was palatable. And, after the isolation of Tubal Cain, the droves of festive people absorbed him. Later, at the bar, he came across an acquaintance, a railroad director, who pointed out to Alexander what notables were present. There was an Englishman, a lord; there was Bartram Ainscough, a famous gambler; there — Alexander's arm was grasped by his companion.

"See that man — no, farther — dark, in a linen suit? Well, that's Partridge Sinnox, of New Orleans." He grew slightly impatient at Hulings' look of inquiry. "Never heard of him! Best-known pistol shot in the States. A man of the highest honor. Will go out on the slightest provocation." His voice lowered. "He's said to have killed twelve — no less. His companion there, from Louisiana too, never leaves him. Prodigiously rich: canefields."

Alexander Hulings looked with small interest at the dueller and his associate. The former had a lean, tanned face, small black eyes that held each a single point of light, and long, precise hands. Here, Alexander thought, was another form of publicity, different from his own. As always, his lips tightened in a faint contempt at pretensions other than his, or threatening to his preëminence. Sinnox inspired none of the dread or curiosity evident in his companion; and he turned from him to the inspection of a Pennsylvania coal magnate.

The colonnade of the hotel faced another cultivated ridge, on which terraced walks mounted to a pavilion at the crest; and there, through the late afternoon, he rested and gazed down at the Springs or over to the village beyond. Alexander was wearier than he had supposed; the iron seemed sud-

denly insupportably burdensome; a longing for lighter, gayer contacts possessed him. He wanted to enter the relaxations of the Springs.

Dancing, he knew, was customary after supper; and he lingered over a careful toilet — bright blue coat, tight black trousers, and flat, glistening slippers, with a soft cambric ruffle. Alexander Hulings surveyed his countenance in a scrap of mirror, and saw, with mingled surprise and discontent, that he — like Veneada — bore unmistakable signs of age, marks of strife and suffering; his whiskers had an evident silvery sheen. Life, receding unnoticed, had set him at the verge of middle age. But at least, he thought, his was not an impotent medial period; if, without material success, he had unexpectedly seen the slightly drawn countenance meeting him in the mirror, he would have killed himself. He realized that coldly. He could never have survived an established nonentity. As it was, descending the stairs to supper, immaculate and disdainful, he was upheld by the memory of his accomplishments, his widening importance, weight. He actually heard a whispered comment: "Hulings, iron."

VII

After supper the furnishings of the dining room were swept aside by a troop of waiters, while a number of the latter, with fiddles and cornets, were grouped on a table, over which a green cloth had been spread. With the inevitable scraping of strings and preliminary unattended dance, a quadrille was formed. Alexander, lounging with other exactly garbed males in the doorway, watched with secret envy the participants in the figures gliding from one to another. As if from another life he recalled their names; they were dancing Le Pantalon now; La Poulee would follow; then the Pastorale and L'Eté.

Above the spreading gauze, the tulle and glacé silks of the women, immense candelabra of glass pendants and candles shone and glittered; the rustle of crinoline, of light passing feet, sounded below the violins and blown cornets, the rich husky voices calling the changes of the quadrille.

He was troubled by an obscure desire to be a center of interest, of importance, for the graceful feminine world about him. Sinnox, the man from New Orleans, was bowing profoundly to his partner; a figure broke up into a general boisterous gallopading — girls, with flushed cheeks, swinging curls, spun from masculine shoulder to shoulder. The dance ended, and the floating, perfumed skirts passed him in a soft flood toward the porch.

Without, the colonnade towered against a sky bright with stars; the night was warm and still. Alexander Hulings was lonely; he attempted to detain the acquaintance met in the bar, but the other, bearing a great bouquet of rosebuds in a lace-paper cone, hurried importantly away. A subdued barytone was singing: "Our Way Across the Mountain, Ho!"

The strains of a waltz, the Carlotta-Grisi, drifted out, and a number of couples answered its invitation.

A group at the iron railing across the foot of the colonnade attracted his attention by its excessive gayety. The center, he saw, was a young woman, with smooth bandeaux and loops of black hair, and a goya lily caught below her ear. She was not handsome, but her features were animated, and her shoulders as finely white and sloping as an alabaster vase.

It was not this that held his attention, but a sense of familiarity, a feeling that he had seen her before. He walked past the group, without plan, and, meeting her gaze, bowed awkwardly in response to a hesitating but unmistakable smile of recognition. Alexander stopped, and she imperiously waved him to join the number about her. He was in a cold dread of the necessity of admitting, before so many, that he could not recall her name; but obviously all that she desired was to swell the circle of her admirers, for, beyond a second nod, she ignored him.

The Southerner was at her shoulder, maintaining a steady flow of repartee, and Alexander envied him his assured presence, his dark, distinguished appearance. The man who had been indicated as Sinnox' companion stood by Hulings, and the latter conceived a violent prejudice for the other's meager yellow face and spiderlike hand, employed with a cheroot.

Alexander hoped that somebody would repeat the name of the girl who had spoken to him. A woman did, but only in the contracted, familiar form of Gisela. . . . Gisela — he had heard that too. Suddenly she affected to be annoyed; she arched her fine brows and glanced about, her gaze falling upon Alexander Hulings. Before he was aware of her movement a smooth white arm was thrust through his; he saw the curve of a powdered cheek, an elevated chin.

" Do take me out of this! " she demanded. " New Orleans molasses is — well, too thick."

Obeying the gentle pressure of her arm, he led her down the steps to the graveled expanse below. She stopped by a figure of the Goddess of Health, in filigree on mossy rocks, pouring water from an urn. Her gown was glazed green muslin, with a mist of white tulle, shining with particles of silver. The goya lily exhaled a poignant scent.

" I didn't really leave because of Mr. Sinnox," she admitted; " a pin was scratching, and I was devoured with curiosity to know who you were, where I had met —— "

Suddenly, in a flash of remembered misery, of bitter resentment, he recognized her — Gisela, John Wooddrop's daughter. The knowledge pinched at his heart with malicious fingers; the starry night, the music and gala attire, his loneliness had betrayed him into an unusual plasticity of being. He delayed for a long breath, and then said dryly: " I'm Alexander Hulings."

" Not —— " she half cried, startled. She drew away from him, and her

face grew cold. In the silence that followed he was conscious of the flower's perfume and the insistent drip of the water falling from the urn. "But I haven't met you at all," she said; "I don't in the least know you." Her attitude was insolent, and yet she unconsciously betrayed a faint curiosity. "I think you lacked delicacy to join my friends — to bring me out here!"

"I didn't," he reminded her; "you brought me."

Instantly he cursed such clumsy stupidity. Her lower lip protruded disdainfully.

"Forgive me," she said, dropping a curtsy, "but I needn't keep you."

She swept away across the gravel and up the stairs to the veranda. It was evident that the group had not separated; for almost immediately there rose a concerted laughter, a palpable mockery, drifting out to Alexander.

His face was hot, his hands clenched in angry resentment. More than anything else, he shrank from being an object of amusement, of gibes. It was necessary to his self-esteem to be met with grave appreciation.

This was his first experience of the keen assaults of social weapons, and it inflicted on him an extravagant suffering. His instinct was to retire farther into the night, only to return to his room when the hotel was dark, deserted. But a second, stronger impulse sent him deliberately after Gisela Wooddrop, up the veranda stairs, and rigidly past the group gazing at him with curious mirth.

An oil flare fixed above them shone down on the lean, saturnine countenance of Partridge Sinnox. The latter, as he caught Alexander Hulings' gaze, smiled slightly.

That expression followed Alexander to his cramped room; it mocked him as he viciously pulled at the bell rope, desiring his servant; it was borne up to him on the faint strains of the violins. And in the morning it clouded his entire outlook. Sinnox' smile expressed a contempt that Alexander Hulings' spirit could not endure. From the first he had been resentful of the Southerner's cheap prestige. He added the qualifying word as he descended to breakfast.

Sinnox, as a dueller, roused Hulings' impatience; he had more than once faced impromptu death — iron bars in the hands of infuriated employees, and he had overborne them with a cold phrase. This theatrical playing with pistols — cheap! Later, in the crowded bar, he was pressed elbow to elbow with Sinnox and his companion; and he automatically and ruthlessly cleared sufficient space for his comfort. Sinnox' associate said, in remonstrance:

"Sir, there are others — perhaps more considerable."

"Perhaps!" Alexander Hulings carelessly agreed.

Sinnox gazed down on him with narrowed eyes.

"I see none about us," he remarked, "who would have to admit the qualification."

Alexander's bitterness increased, became aggressive. He met Sinnox' gaze with a stiff, dangerous scorn:

" In your case, at least, it needn't stand."

" Gentlemen," the third cried, " no more, I beg of you." He grasped Alexander Hulings' arm. " Withdraw! " he advised. " Mr. Sinnox' temper is fatal. Beyond a certain point it cannot be leashed. It has caused great grief. Gentlemen, I beg —— "

" Do you mean —— " Sinnox demanded, and his face was covered by an even, dark flush to the sweep of his hair.

" Cheap! " Alexander's voice was sudden and unpremeditated.

The other's temper rose in a black passion; he became so enraged that his words were mere unintelligible gasps. His hand shook so that he dropped a glass of rock-and-rye splintering on the floor. " At once! " he finally articulated. " Scurvy —— "

" This couldn't be helped," his companion proclaimed, agitated. " I warned the other gentleman. Mr. Sinnox is not himself in a rage, his record is well known. He was elbowed aside by —— "

" Alexander Hulings! " that individual pronounced.

He was aware of the gaze of the crowding men about him; already he was conscious of an admiration roused by the mere fact of his facing a notorious bully. Cheap! The director joined him.

" By heavens, Hulings, you're in dangerous water. I understand you have no family."

" None! " Alexander stated curtly.

Illogically he was conscious of the scent of a goya lily. Sinnox was propelled from the bar, and his friend reappeared and conferred with the director.

" At once! " Hulings heard the former announce. " Mr. Sinnox . . . unbearable! "

" Have you a case of pistols? " the director asked. " Mr. Sinnox offers his. I believe there is a quiet opening back of the bathhouse. But my earnest advice to you is to withdraw; you will be very little blamed; this man is notorious, a professional fighter. You have only to say —— "

Cheap! Alexander thought again, fretful at having been involved in such a ridiculous affair. He was even more deliberate than usual; but, though he was certain of his entire normality, the faces about him resembled small, bobbing balloons.

Alexander finished his drink — surprised to find himself still standing by the bar — and silently followed the director through the great hall of the hotel out on to the veranda, and across the grass to a spot hidden from the valley by the long, low bulk of the bathing house.

Sinnox and his companion, with a polished mahogany box, were already there; a small, curious group congregated in the distance. Sinnox' friend produced long pistols with silken-brown barrels and elegantly carved ivory

stocks, into which he formally rammed powder and balls. Alexander Hulings was composed; but his fingers were cold, slightly numb, and he rubbed them together angrily. Not for an instant did he think that he might be killed; other curious, faint emotions assailed him — long-forgotten memories of distant years; Veneada's kindly hand on his shoulder; the mule called Alexander because of its aptitude for hard labor; John Wooddrop's daughter.

He saw that the pistols had been loaded; their manipulator stood with them, butts extended, in his grasp. He began a preamble of customary explanation, which he ended by demanding, for his principal, an apology from Alexander Hulings. The latter, making no reply, was attracted by Sinnox' expression of deepening passion; the man's face, he thought, positively was black. Partridge Sinnox' entire body was twitching with rage. . . . Curious, for a seasoned, famous dueller!

Suddenly Sinnox, with a broken exclamation, swung on his heel, grasped one of the pistols in his second's hands, and discharged it point-blank at Alexander Hulings.

An instant confused outcry rose. Alexander heard the term " Insane! " pronounced, as if in extenuation, by Sinnox' friend. The latter held the remaining, undischarged pistol out of reach; the other lay on the ground before Partridge Sinnox. Alexander's face was as grey as granite.

" That was the way he did it," he unconsciously pronounced aloud.

He wondered slowly at the fact that he had been unhit. Then, with his hand in a pocket, he walked stiffly up to within a few feet of Sinnox, and produced a small, ugly derringer, with one blunt barrel on top of the other.

At the stunning report that followed, the vicious, stinging cloud of smoke, he seemed to wake. He felt himself propelled away from the vicinity of the bathhouse; low, excited exclamations beat upon his ears: " Absolutely justified! " " Horrible attempt to murder! " " Get his nigger and things. Best for the present." He impatiently shook himself free from his small following.

" Did I kill him? " he demanded.

There was an affirmative silence.

In his wagon, driving rapidly toward Tubal Cain, a sudden sense of horror, weakness, overtook him; the roadside rocked beneath his vision.

" Mordecai," he said to his coachman, " I — I shot a man, derringered him."

The negro was unmoved.

" Man 'at fool round you, he's bound to be killed! " he asserted. " Yes, sir; he just throwed himself right away! "

Alexander Hulings wondered how John Wooddrop's daughter would be affected. At least, he thought grimly, once more self-possessed, he had put a stop to her laughter at his expense.

VIII

In the weeks that followed he devoted himself energetically to the finishing of the mansion in course of erection above Tubal Cain. It was an uncompromising, square edifice of brick, with a railed belvedere on the roof, and a front lawn enclosed by a cast-iron fence. On each side of the path dividing the sod were wooden Chinese pagodas like those he had seen at the Mineral Springs; masoned rings for flower beds, and ferneries, artificially heaped stones, with a fine spray from concealed pipes. Rearing its solid bulk against the living greenery of the forest, it was, he told himself pridefully, a considerable dwelling. Within were high walls and flowery ceilings, Italian marble mantels and tall mirrors, black carved and gilded furniture, and brilliant hassocks on thick-piled carpet.

The greater part of the labor was performed by the many skilled workmen now employed in his furnaces and forges. He was utterly regardless of cost, obligations; of money itself. Alexander had always been impatient at the mere material fact of wealth, of the possession and the accumulation of sheer gold. To him it was nothing more than a lever by which he moved men and things; it was a ladder that carried him above the unnoticed and unnotable. He could always get money, at need, from men or iron; to debts he never gave a thought — when they fell due they were discharged or carried forward.

His reason for finishing his dwelling with such elaboration was obscure. Veneada had laughed at him, speaking of small Hulingses, but he harbored no concrete purpose of marriage; there was even no dominant feminine figure in his thoughts. Perhaps faintly at times he caught the odor of a goya lily; but that was probably due to the fact that lilies were already blooming in the circular conservatory of highly colored glass attached to his veranda.

The greater part of the house was darkened, shrouded in linen. He would see, when walking through the hall, mysterious and shadowy vistas, lengthened endlessly in the long mirrors, of dusky carpet and alabaster and ormolu, the faint glitter of the prisms hung on the mantel lamps. Clocks would strike sonorously in the depths of halls, with the ripple of cathedral chimes. He had a housekeeper, a stout person in oiled curls, and a number of excessively humble negro servants. Alexander Hulings got from all this an acute pleasure. It, too, was a mark of his success.

He had, below, on the public road, a small edifice of one room, which formed his office, and there he saw the vast number of men always consulting with him; he never took them above to his house. And when they dined with him it was at the hotel, newly built by the packet station on the canal — functions flooded with the prodigal amounts of champagne Hulings thought necessary to his importance.

Most of his days were spent in his road wagon, in which he traveled to Pittsburgh, West Virginia, Philadelphia, where he had properties or inter-

ests. In the cities of his associates he also avoided their homes, and met them in hotels, discussed the terms of business in bars or public parlors. With women of position he was at once indifferent and ill at ease, constantly certain that he was not appearing to good advantage, and suspecting their asides and enigmatic smiles. He was laboriously, stiffly polite, speaking in complimentary flourishes that sometimes ended in abrupt constraint. At this, afterward, he would chafe, and damn the superior airs of women.

He had returned from such an expedition to Wheeling, and was sitting in his office, when a vehicle pulled up before his door. Deliberate feet approached, and John Wooddrop entered. The latter, Alexander realized enviously, was an excessively handsome old man; he had a commanding height and a square, highly colored countenance, with close white sideburns and vigorous silver hair. His manner, too, was assured and easy. He greeted Alexander Hulings with a keen, open smile.

"Everything is splendid here!" he proclaimed. "I looked in that chafery down stream, and the metal was worked like satin. Fine weather for the furnaces — rain's ugly; a furnace is like a young girl."

Hulings wondered — contained and suspicious — what the other wanted. Wooddrop, though they passed each other frequently on the road, had not saluted him since the completion of Glory Furnace. He thought for a moment that already the older man was feeling the pinch of fuel scarcity and that he had come to beg for timber. In such a case Alexander Hulings decided coldly that he would not sell Wooddrop an ell of forest. In addition to the fact that the complete success of one or the other depended ultimately on his rival's failure, he maintained a personal dislike of John Wooddrop; he had never forgotten the humiliation forced on him long before, in the dining room of the packet, the *Hit or Miss;* he could not forgive Wooddrop's preëminence in the iron field. The latter was a legend of the manufacture of iron.

However, any idea of the other's begging privilege was immediately banished by John Wooddrop's equable bearing. He said:

"I want to speak to you, Hulings, about a rather delicate matter. In a way it is connected with my daughter, Gisela. You saw her, I believe, at the Springs."

Alexander Hulings somberly inclined his head.

"Of course," Wooddrop continued, "I heard about the difficulty you had with that Louisiana bravo. I understand you acted like a man of spirit and were completely exonerated; in fact, I had some small part in quashing legal complications. This was done not on your account, but because of Gisela, who confided to me that she held herself in blame. Mr. Hulings," he said gravely, "my feeling for my daughter is not the usual affection of parent for child. My wife is dead. Gisela —— But I won't open a personal subject with you. I spoke as I did merely, in a way, to prepare

you for what follows. My daughter felt that she did you a painful wrong; and I have come, in consequence, to offer you my good will. I propose that we end our competition and proceed together, for the good of both. Consolidated, we should inevitably control the iron situation in our state; you are younger, more vigorous than myself, and I have a certain prestige. Sir, I offer you the hand of friendly coöperation."

Alexander Hulings' gaze narrowed as he studied the man before him. At first, he had searched for an ulterior motive, need, in Wooddrop's proposal; but he quickly saw that the proposal had been completely stated. Illogically he thought of black ringleted hair and glazed muslin; he heard the echo of water dripping from a stone urn. Lost in memories, he was silent, for so long that John Wooddrop palpably grew impatient. He cleared his throat sharply; but Hulings didn't shift a muscle. Alexander was thinking now of the order he had filled the first summer at Tubal Cain, of his brutal labor and bitter, deferred aspirations. His rise, alone, had been at the price of ceaseless struggle; it was not yet consummated; but it would be — it must, and still alone. Nothing should rob him of the credit of his accomplishment; no person coupled with him might reduce or share his triumph. What he said sounded inexcusably harsh after the other's open manner.

"Only," he said, "only if the amalgamated industries bear my name — the Alexander Hulings Ironworks."

John Wooddrop's face darkened as he comprehended the implied insult to his dignity and position. He rose, so violently thrusting back the chair in which he had been sitting, that it fell with a clatter.

"You brass trumpet!" he ejaculated. "You intolerable little bag of vanity! Will you never see yourself except in a glass of flattery or intolerable self-satisfaction? It would be impossible to say which you inspire most, contempt or pity."

Strangely enough, Hulings didn't resent the language applied to him. He gazed at Wooddrop without anger. The other's noise, he thought, was but a symptom of his coming downfall. He was slowly but surely drawing the rope about the throat of Wooddrop's industries.

"Absolutely the last time," the other stuttered. "Now you can go to hell on your own high horse! Blinded by your own fatuousness — don't see where the country is running. You may impose on others, but I know your business, sir; and it's as hollow as a tin plate stove. The times will soon kick it in."

John Wooddrop stamped away from Hulings in a rage.

IX

That evening Alexander Hulings wondered what Gisela had told her father; he wondered more vaguely what she had thought of him — what,

if at all, she still thought. He had had a formal room illuminated for his cigar after dinner; and he sat, a small, precise figure, with dust-colored hair and a somber, intent countenance, clasping a heavy roll of expensive tobacco, in a crimson plush chair. The silence, the emptiness about him was filled with rich color, ponderous maroon draperies, marble slabs and fretted tulip-wood.

It suddenly struck him that, by himself, he was slightly ridiculous in such opulence. His house needed a mistress, a creature of elegance to preside at his table, to exhibit in her silks and jewels another sign of his importance. Again, as if from the conservatory, he caught a faint poignant perfume.

Gisela Wooddrop was a person of distinction, self-possessed and charming. There was a subtle flavor in thus considering her father's daughter — old Wooddrop's girl — and himself. He rose and walked to a mirror, critically surveying his countenance; yes, it was well marked by age, yet it was sharp in outline; his step was springy; he felt none of the lassitude of increasing years.

He was in his prime. Many young women would prefer him, his house and name, to the windy pretensions of youthful scapegoats. A diamond necklace was a convincing form of courtship. There was no absolute plan in his thoughts that night; but, in the dry romantic absorption of the days that followed, a fantastic purpose formed and increased — he determined to marry Gisela Wooddrop.

He had for this, he assured himself, some slight encouragement; it was patent that her father had entirely misread the girl's intent in suggesting an end to the hostilities which had made impossible any social intercourse. She was interested in him; the duel with Sinnox had captured her imagination. Women responded surprisingly to such things. Then she had held that it had been partly her fault! Now it seemed to him that he understood why he had built so elaborately since his return from the Mineral Springs; unconsciously — all the while — it had been for his wife, for Gisela.

There were great practical difficulties in the realization of his desire, even in his opportunity to present his question; to see Gisela Wooddrop long enough and sufficiently privately to explain all he hoped. He was, too, far past the age of romantic assignations, episodes; he could no more decorate a moonlit scene beneath a window. Alexander must not count on adventitious assistance from emotional setting: his offer could carry only its grave material solidity. Often he laughed curtly at what momentarily seemed an absurd fantasy, a madness approaching senility; then his pride would flood back, reassert the strength of his determination, the desirability of Alexander Hulings.

X

The occasion evaded him; the simplicity of his wish, of the bald relationship between the Wooddrops and Tubal Cain, preventing it more surely than a multiplication of barriers. He never considered the possibility of a compromise with John Wooddrop, a retreat from his position. Alexander thought of Gisela as a possible addition to his dignity and standing — of the few women he had seen she possessed the greatest attractions — and he gave no thought of a sacrifice to gain her. She was to be a piece with the rest of his success — a wife to honor his mansion, to greet a selected few of his friends, and wear the gold and jewels purchased by the Hulings iron.

He made no overt attempt to see her, but waited for opportunity. Meantime he had commenced to think of her in terms of passionless intimacy. Alexander Hulings was a solitary man; except for his industrial activity his mind was empty; and Gisela Wooddrop quickly usurped the hours after dinner, the long drives through massed and unscarred forests. He recalled her minutely — every expression that he had seen, every variation of dress. Wooddrop's daughter was handsomely provided for; but Alexander Hulings' wife would be a revelation in luxury. In New York he bought a pair of India cashmere shawls, paying a thousand dollars for them, and placed them on a chair, ready.

The weeks multiplied; and he got such pleasure from the mere thought of Gisela sweeping through his rooms, accompanying him to Philadelphia, shining beside him at the opera, that he became almost reluctant to force the issue of her choice. He was more than customarily careful with his clothes; his silk hats were immaculate; his trousers ranged in color from the most delicate sulphur to astounding London checks; he had his yellow boots polished with champagne; his handkerchiefs scented with essence of nolette and almond. For all this, his countenance was none the less severe, his aptitude for labor untouched; he followed every detail of iron manufacture, every improved process, every shift in the market.

The valley about Tubal Cain now resembled a small, widely scattered town; the dwellings of Hulings' workmen extended to the property line of the Blue Lump Furnace; roads were cut, bridges thrown across the stream. The flutter of wings, the pouring birdsong and vale of green, that Alexander had found had given place to a continuous, shattering uproar day and night; the charging of furnaces, the dull thunder of the heavy wagons of blooms, the jangle of shingling sledges and monotonous fall of trip hammers, mingled and rose in a stridulous volume to the sky, accompanied by chemical vapors, uprushing cinders and the sooty smoke of the forges. A company store had been built and stocked, and grimy troops of laborers were perpetually gathered, off shift, by its face.

Harmony itself, the station on the canal, had expanded; the new hotel,

an edifice of brick with a steep slate roof and iron grilling, faced a rival saloon and various emporia of merchandise. An additional basin had been cut in the bank for the loading of Alexander Hulings' iron on to the canal boats.

He had driven to the canal — it was early summer — to see about a congestion of movement; and, hot, he stopped in the hotel for a pint of wine in a high glass with cracked ice. The lower floor was cut in half by a hall and stairs; on the right the bar opened on the narrow porch, while at the left a ladies' entrance gave way to the inevitable dark, already musty parlor. The bar was crowded, and, intolerant of the least curtailment of his dignity or comfort, he secured his glass and moved across the hall to the stillness of the parlor.

A woman was standing, blurred in outline, at one of the narrow windows. She turned as he entered; he bowed, prepared to withdraw, when he saw that it was Gisela Wooddrop. She wore white muslin, sprigged in orange chenille, with green ribbons, and carried a green parasol. Alexander stood motionless in the doorway, his champagne in one hand and a glossy stovepipe hat in the other. He was aware of a slight inward confusion, but outwardly he was unmoved, exact. Gisela, too, maintained the turn of her flexible body, her hands on the top of the parasol. Under her bonnet her face was pale, her eyes noticeably bright. Alexander Hulings said:

" Good afternoon! "

He moved into the room. Gisela said nothing; she was like a graceful painted figure on a shadowy background. A complete ease possessed Alexander.

" Miss Wooddrop," he continued, in the vein of a simple statement. She nodded automatically. " This is a happy meeting — for me. I can now express my gratitude for your concern about a certain unfortunate occurrence at the Mineral Springs. At the same time, I regret that you were caused the slightest uneasiness."

She shuddered delicately.

" Nothing more need be said about that," she told him. " I explained to my father; but I was sorry afterward that I did it, and — and put him to fresh humiliation."

" There," he gravely replied, " little enough can be discussed. It has to do with things that you would have limited patience with, strictly an affair of business. I was referring to your susceptibility of heart, a charming female quality."

He bowed stiffly. Gisela came nearer to him, a sudden emotion trembling on her features.

" Why don't you end it? " she cried, low and distressed. " It has gone on a long while now — the bitterness between you; I am certain in his heart father is weary of it, and you are younger —— " She broke off before the tightening of his lips.

" Not a topic to be developed here," he insisted.

He had no intention, Alexander Hulings thought, of being bent about even so charming a finger. And it was well to establish at once the manner in which any future they might share should be conducted. He wanted a wife, not an intrigante nor Amazon. Her feeling, color, rapidly evaporated, and left her pallid, confused, before his calm demeanor. She turned her head away, her face lost in the bonnet, but slowly her gaze returned to meet his keen inquiry. His impulse was to ask her, then, at once, to marry him; but he restrained that headlong course, feeling that it would startle her into flight. As it was, she moved slowly toward the door.

" I am to meet a friend on the Western packet," she explained; " I thought I heard the horn."

" It was only freight," he replied. " I should be sorry to lose this short opportunity to pay you my respects; to tell you that you have been a lot in my thoughts lately. I envy the men who see you casually, whenever they choose."

She gazed at him with palpable surprise gathering in her widely opened eyes. " But," she said breathlessly, " everybody knows that you never address a polite syllable to a woman. It is more speculated on than any of your other traits."

He expanded at this indication of a widespread discussion of his qualities.

" I have had no time for merely polite speeches," he responded. " And I assure you that I am not only complimentary now; I mean that I am not saluting you with vapid elegance. I am waiting only a more fitting occasion to speak further."

She circled him slowly, with a minute whispering of crinoline, her gaze never leaving his face. Her muslin, below her white, bare throat, circled by a black velvet band, was heaving. The parasol fell with a clatter. He stooped immediately; but she was before him and snatched it up, with crimson cheeks.

" They say that you are the most hateful man alive! " she half breathed.

" Who are ' they '? " he demanded contemptuously. " Men I have beaten and women I failed to see. That hatred grows with success, with power; it is never wasted on the weak. My competitors would like to see me fall into a furnace stack — the men I have climbed over, and my debtors. They are combining every month to push me to the wall, a dozen of them together, yelping like a pack of dogs. But they haven't succeeded; they never will! " His words were like the chips from an iron bloom. " They never will," he repeated harshly, " and I have only begun. I want you to see my house sometime. I planned a great part of it with you in mind. No money was spared. . . . I should be happy to have you like it. I think of it as yours."

All the time he was speaking she was stealing by imperceptible degrees toward the door; but at his last, surprising sentence she stood transfixed

with mingled wonder and fear. She felt behind her for the open doorway and rested one hand against the woodwork. A ribald clatter sounded from the bar, and without rose the faint, clear note of an approaching packet. Her lips formed for speech, but only a slight gasp was audible; then her spreading skirts billowed through the opening, and she was gone.

Alexander Hulings found that he was still holding his silk hat; he placed it carefully on the table and took a deep drink from the iced glass. He was conscious of a greater feeling of triumph than he had ever known before. He realized that he had hardly needed to add the spoken word to the impression his being had made on Gisela Wooddrop. He had already invaded her imagination; the legend of his struggle and growth had taken possession of her. There remained now only a formal declaration, the outcome of which he felt almost certain would be in his favor.

Again in his house, he inspected the silk hangings of the particularly feminine chambers. He trod the thick carpets with a keen anticipation of her exclamations of pleasure, her surprise at convenient trifle after trifle. In the stable he surveyed a blooded mare she might take a fancy to; he must buy a light carriage, with a fringed canopy — yes, and put a driver into livery. Women liked such things.

At dinner he speculated on the feminine palate; he liked lean mountain venison, and a sherry that left almost a sensation of dust on the tongue; but women preferred sparkling hock and pastry, fruit preserved in white brandy, and pagodas of barley sugar.

Through the open windows came the subdued clatter of his forges; the hooded candles on the table flickered slightly in a warm eddy, while corresponding shadows stirred on the heavy napery, the Sheffield, and delicate creamy Belleek of his dinner service — the emblem of his certitude and pride.

XI

In October Alexander Hulings took Gisela Wooddrop to the home that had been so largely planned for her enjoyment. They had been married in a private parlor of the United States Hotel, in Philadelphia; and after a small supper had gone to the Opera House to see "Love in a Village," followed by a musical *pasticcio*. Gisela's mother had died the winter before, and she was attended by an elderly distant cousin; no one else was present at the wedding ceremony except a friend of Gisela's — a girl who wept copiously — and Doctor Veneada. The latter's skin hung in loose folds, like a sack partially emptied of its contents; his customary spirit had evaporated too; and he sat through the wedding supper neither eating nor speaking, save for the forced proposal of the bride's health.

Gisela Wooddrop and Alexander Hulings, meeting on a number of carefully planned, apparently accidental occasions, had decided to be married while John Wooddrop was confined to his room by severe gout. In this man-

ner they avoided the unpleasant certainty of his refusal to attend his daughter's, and only child's, wedding. Gisela had not told Alexander Hulings what the aging Ironmaster had said when necessarily informed of her purpose. No message had come to Alexander from John Wooddrop; since the ceremony the Hulingses had had no sign of the other's existence.

Alexander surveyed his wife with huge satisfaction as they sat for the first time at supper in their house. She wore white, with the diamonds he had given her about her firm young throat, black-enamel bracelets on her wrists, and her hair in a gilt net. She sighed with deep pleasure.

" It's wonderful! " she proclaimed, and then corroborated all he had surmised about the growth of her interest in him; it had reached forward and back from the killing of Partridge Sinnox. " That was the first time," she told him, " that I realized you were so — so big. You looked so miserable on the canal boat, coming out here those years ago, that it hardly seemed possible for you merely to live; and when you started the hearths at Tubal Cain everyone who knew anything about iron just laughed at you — we used to go down sometimes and look at those killing workmen you had, and that single mule and old horse.

" I wasn't interested then, and I don't know when it happened; but now I can see that a time soon came when men stopped laughing at you. I can just remember when father first became seriously annoyed, when he declared that he was going to force you out of the valleys at once. But it seemed you didn't go. And then in a few months he came home in a dreadful temper, when he found that you controlled all the timber on the mountains. He said of course you would break before he was really short of charcoal. But it seems you haven't broken. And now I'm married to you; I'm Gisela Hulings! "

" This is hardly more than the beginning," he added; " the foundation — just as iron is the base for so much. I — we — are going on," he corrected the period lamely, but was rewarded by a charming smile. " Power! " he said, shutting up one hand, his straight, fine features as hard as the cameo in his neckcloth.

She instantly fired at his tensity of will.

" How splendid you are, Alexander! " she cried. " How tremendously satisfactory for a woman to share! You can have no idea what it means to be with a man like a stone wall!

" I wish," she said, " that you would always tell me about your work. I'd like more than anything else to see you going on, step by step up. I suppose it is extraordinary in a woman. I felt that way about father's iron, and he only laughed at me; and yet once I kept a forge daybook almost a week, when a clerk was ill. I think I could be of real assistance to you, Alexander."

He regarded with the profoundest distaste any mingling of his, Alexander Hulings', wife and a commercial industry. He had married in order to

give his life a final touch of elegance and proper symmetry. No, no; he wanted Gisela to receive him at the door of his mansion, in fleckless white, as she was now, and jewels, at the end of his day in the clamor and soot of business and put it temporarily from his thoughts.

He was distinctly annoyed that her father had permitted her to post the forge book; it was an exceedingly unladylike proceeding. He told her something of this in carefully chosen, deliberate words; and she listened quietly, but with a faint air of disappointment.

"I want you to buy yourself whatever you fancy," he continued; "nothing is too good for you — for my wife. I am very proud of you and insist on your making the best appearance, wherever we are. Next year, if the political weather clears at all, we'll go to Paris, and you can explore the mantua-makers there. You got the shawls in your dressing room?"

She hesitated, cutting uncertainly with a heavy silver knife at a crystallized citron.

Then, with an expression of determination, she addressed him again:

"But don't you see that it is your power, your success over men, that fascinates me; that first made me think of you? In a way this is not — not an ordinary affair of ours; I had other chances more commonplace, which my father encouraged, but they seemed so stupid that I couldn't entertain them. I love pretty clothes, Alexander; I adore the things you've given me; but will you mind my saying that that isn't what I married you for? I am sure you don't care for such details, for money itself, in the least. You are too strong. And that is why I did marry you, why I love to think about you, and what I want to follow, to admire and understand."

He was conscious of only a slight irritation at this masculine-sounding speech; he must have no hesitation in uprooting such ideas from his wife's thoughts; they detracted from her feminine charm, struck at the bottom of her duties, her privileges and place.

"At the next furnace in blast," he told her with admirable control, "the workmen will insist on your throwing in, as my bride, a slipper; and in that way you can help the charge."

Then, by planning an immediate trip with her to West Virginia, he abruptly brought the discussion to a close.

Alexander was pleased, during the weeks which followed, at the fact that she made no further reference to iron. She went about the house, gravely busy with its maintenance, as direct and efficient as he was in the larger realm. Almost her first act was to discharge the housekeeper. The woman came to Alexander, her fat face smeared with crying, and protested bitterly against the loss of a place she had filled since the house was roofed.

He was, of course, curt with her, and ratified Gisela's decision; but privately he was annoyed. He had not even intended his wife to discharge the practical duties of living — thinking of her as a suave figure languidly

moving from parlor to dining room or boudoir; however, meeting her in a hall, energetically directing the dusting of a cornice, in a rare flash of perception he said nothing.

XII

He would not admit, even to himself, that his material affairs were less satisfactory than they had been the year before, but such he vaguely knew was a fact. Speculation in Western government lands, large investments in transportation systems for the present fallow, had brought about a general condition of commercial unrest. Alexander Hulings felt this, not only by the delayed payment for shipments of metal, but in the allied interests he had accumulated. Merchandise was often preceded by demands for payment; the business of a nail manufactory he owned in Wheeling had been cut in half.

He could detect concern in the shrewd countenance and tones of Samuel Cryble, a hard-headed Yankee from a Scotch Protestant valley in New Hampshire, who had risen to the position of his chief assistant and, in a small way, copartner. They sat together in the dingy office on the public road and silently, grimly, went over invoices and payments, debts and debtors. It was on such an occasion that Alexander had word of the death of Doctor Veneada.

Hulings' involuntary concern, the stirred memories of the dead man's liberal spirit and mind — he had been the only person Alexander Hulings could call friend — speedily gave place to a growing anxiety as to how Veneada might have left his affairs. He had been largely a careless man in practical matters.

Alexander had never satisfied the mortgage he had granted Veneada on the timber properties purchased with the other man's money. He had tried to settle the indebtedness when it had first fallen due, but the doctor had begged him to let the money remain as it was.

"I'll only throw it away on some confounded soft-witted scheme, Alex," he had insisted. "With you, I know where it is; it's a good investment."

Now Hulings recalled that the second extension had expired only a few weeks before Veneada's death, incurring an obligation the settlement of which he had been impatiently deferring until he saw the other.

He had had a feeling that Veneada, with no near or highly regarded relatives, would will him the timber about the valleys; yet he was anxious to have the thing settled. The Alexander Hulings Company was short of available funds. He returned to Eastlake for Veneada's funeral; and there, for the first time, he saw the cousins to whom the doctor had occasionally and lightly alluded. They were, he decided, a lean and rapacious crew.

He remained in Eastlake for another twenty-four hours, but was forced to leave with nothing discovered; and it was not until a week later that, again in his office, he learned that Veneada had made no will. This, it

seemed, had been shown beyond any doubt. He rose, walked to a dusty window, and gazed out unseeingly at an eddy of dead leaves and dry metallic snow in a bleak November wind.

After a vague, disconcerted moment he shrewdly divined exactly what would occur. He said nothing to Cryble, seated with his back toward him; and even Gisela looked with silent inquiry at his absorption throughout supper. She never questioned him now about any abstraction that might be concerned with affairs outside their pleasant life together.

The inevitable letter at last arrived, announcing the fact that, in a partition settlement of Veneada's estate by his heirs, it was necessary to settle the expired mortgage. It could not have come, he realized, at a more inconvenient time.

He was forced to discuss the position with Cryble; and the latter heard him to the end with a narrowed, searching vision.

" That money out of the business now might leave us on the bank," he asserted. " As I see it, there's but one thing to do — go over all the timber, judge what we actually will need for coaling, buy that — or, if we must, put another mortgage on it — and let the rest, a good two-thirds, go."

This, Alexander acknowledged to himself, was the logical if not the only course. And then John Wooddrop would purchase the remainder; he would have enough charcoal to keep up his local industries beyond his own life and another. All his — Alexander's — planning, aspirations, sacrifice, would have been for nothing. He would never, like John Wooddrop, be a great industrial despot, or command, as he had so often pictured, the iron situation of the state. To do that, he would have to control all the iron the fumes of whose manufacture stained the sky for miles about Harmony. If Wooddrop recovered an adequate fuel supply Alexander Hulings would never occupy a position of more than secondary importance.

There was a bare possibility of his retaining all the tracts again by a second mortgage; but as he examined that, it sank from a potentiality to a thing without substance. It would invite an investigation, a public gleaning of facts, that he must now avoid. His pride could not contemplate the publication of the undeniable truth — that what he had so laboriously built up stood on an insecure foundation.

" It is necessary," he said stiffly, " in order to realize on my calculations, that I continue to hold all the timber at present in my name."

" And that's where you make a misjudgment," Cryble declared, with an equal bluntness. " I can see clear enough that you are letting your personal feeling affect your business sense. There is room enough in Pennsylvania for both you and old Wooddrop. Anyhow, there's got to be somebody second in the parade, and that is a whole lot better than tail end."

Alexander Hulings nodded absently; Cryble's philosophy was correct for a clerk, an assistant, but Alexander Hulings felt the tyranny of a wider necessity. He wondered where he could get the money to satisfy the claim

of the doctor's heirs. His manufacturing interests in West Virginia, depreciated as they were at present, would about cover the debt. Ordinarily they were worth a third more; and in ten years they would double in value. He relentlessly crushed all regret at parting with what was now his best property and promptly made arrangements to secure permanently the timberland.

Soon, he felt, John Wooddrop must feel the pinch of fuel shortage; and Alexander awaited such development with keen attention. As he had anticipated, when driving from the canal, he saw that the Blue Lump Furnace had gone out of blast, its workmen dispersed. Gisela, the day before, had been to see her father; and he was curious to hear what she might report. A feeling of coming triumph, of inevitable worldly expansion, settled comfortably over him, and he regarded his wife pleasantly through a curtain of cigar smoke.

They were seated in a parlor, already shadowy with an early February dusk; coals were burning brightly in a polished open stove, by which Gisela was embroidering in brightly colored wool on a frame. She had the intent, placid expression of a woman absorbed in a small, familiar duty. As he watched her Alexander Hulings' satisfaction deepened — young and fine and vigorous, she was preëminently a wife for his importance and position. She gazed at him vacantly, her eyes crinkled at the corners, her lips soundlessly counting stitches, and a faint smile rose to his lips.

He was anxious to hear what she might say about John Wooddrop, and yet a feeling of propriety restrained him from a direct question. He had not had a line, a word or message, from Wooddrop since he had married the other's daughter. The aging man, he knew, idolized Gisela; and her desertion — for so John Wooddrop would hold it — must have torn the Ironmaster. She had, however, been justified in her choice, he contentedly continued his train of thought. Gisela had everything a woman could wish for. He had been a thoughtful husband. Her clothes, of the most beautiful texture and design, were pinned with jewels; her deftly moving fingers flashed with rings; the symbol of his success, his ——

"My father looks badly, Alexander," she said suddenly. "I wish you would see him, and that he would talk to you. But you won't and he won't. He is very nearly as stubborn as yourself. I wish you could make a move; after all, you are younger. . . . But then, you would make each other furious in a second." She sighed deeply.

"Has he shown any desire to see me?"

"No," she admitted. "You must know he thinks you married me only to get his furnaces; he is ridiculous about it — just as if you needed any more! He has been fuming and planning a hundred things since his charcoal has been getting low."

She stopped and scrutinized her embroidery, a naïve pattern of rose and

urn and motto. He drew a long breath; that was the first tangible indication he had had of the working out of his planning, the justification of his sacrifice.

" I admire father," she went on once more, conversationally; " my love for you hasn't blinded me to his qualities. He has a surprising courage and vigor for an —— Why, he must be nearly seventy! And now he has the most extraordinary plan for what he calls ' getting the better of you.' He was as nice with me as possible, but I could see that he thinks you're lost this time. . . . No, the darker green. Alexander, don't you think the words would be sweet in magenta? "

" Well," he demanded harshly, leaning forward, " what is this plan? "

She looked up, surprised at his hard impatience.

" How queer you are! And that's your iron expression; you know it's expressly forbidden in the house, after hours. His plan? I'm certain there's no disloyalty in telling you. Isn't it mad, at his age? And it will cost him an outrageous amount of money. He is going to change the entire system of all his forges and furnaces. It seems stone coal has been found on his slopes; and he is going to blow in with that, and use a hot blast in his smelting."

Alexander Hulings sat rigid, motionless; the cigar in his hand cast up an unbroken blue ribbon of smoke. Twice he started to speak, to exclaim incredulously; but he uttered no sound. It seemed that all his planning had been utterly overthrown, ruined; in a manner which he — anyone — could not have foreseen. The blowing in of furnaces with hard coal had developed since his entrance into the iron field. It had not been generally declared successful; the pig produced had been so impure that, with working in an ordinary or even puddling forge, it had often to be subjected to a third, finery fire. But he had been conscious of a slow improvement in the newer working; he had vaguely acknowledged that sometime anthracite would displace charcoal for manufacturing purposes; in future years he might adopt it himself.

But John Wooddrop had done it before him; all the square miles of timber that he had acquired with such difficulty, that he had retained at the sacrifice of his best property, would be worthless. The greater part of it could not be teamed across Wooddrop's private roads or hauled advantageously over a hundred intervening streams and miles. It was all wasted, lapsed — his money and dreams!

" It will take over a year," she went on. " I don't understand it at all; but it seems that sending a hot blast into a furnace, instead of the cold, keeps the metal at a more even temperature. Father's so interested you'd think he was just starting out in life — though, really, he is an old man." She laughed. " Competition has been good for him."

All thrown away; in vain! Alexander Hulings wondered what acidulous comment Cryble would make. There were no coal deposits on his land, its

nature forbade that; besides, he had no money to change the principal of his drafts. He gazed about at the luxury that surrounded Gisela and himself; there was no lien on the house, but there still remained some thousands of dollars to pay on the carpets and fixtures. His credit, at least, was unimpeachable; decorators, tradespeople of all sorts, had been glad to have him in their debt. But if any whisper of financial stringency escaped, a horde would be howling about his gate, demanding the settlement of their picayune accounts.

The twilight had deepened; the fire made a ruddy area in the gloom, into the heart of which he flung his cigar. His wife embroidered serenely. As he watched her, noting her firm, well-modeled features, realizing her utter unconsciousness of all that he essentially at that moment was, he felt a strange sensation of loneliness, of isolation.

Alexander Hulings had a sudden impulse to take her into his confidence; to explain everything to her — the disaster that had overtaken his project of ultimate power, the loss of the West Virginia interest, the tightness of money. He had a feeling that she would not be a negligible adviser — he had been a witness of her efficient management of his house — and he felt a craving for the sympathy she would instantly extend.

Alexander parted his lips to inform her of all that had occurred; but the habit of years, the innate fiber of his being, prevented. A wife, he reminded himself, a woman, had no part in the bitter struggle for existence; it was not becoming for her to mingle with the affairs of men. She should be purely a creature of elegance, of solace, and, dressed in India muslin or vaporous silk, ornament a divan, sing French or Italian songs at a piano. The other was manifestly improper.

This, illogically, made him irritable with Gisela; she appeared, contentedly sewing, a peculiarly useless appendage in his present stress of mind. He was glum again at supper, and afterward retired into an office he had had arranged on the ground floor of the mansion. There he got out a number of papers, accounts and pass books; but he spent little actual time on them. He sat back in his chair, with his head sunk low, and mind thronged with memories of the past, of his long, uphill struggle against oblivion and ill health.

Veneada was gone; yes, and Conrad Wishon too — the supporters and confidants of his beginning. He himself was fifty years old. At that age a man should be firmly established, successful, and not deviled by a thousand unexpected mishaps. By fifty a man's mind should be reasonably at rest, his accomplishment and future secure; yet there was nothing of security, but only combat, before him.

Wooddrop had been a rich man from the start, when he, Alexander Hulings, at the humiliating failure of the law, had had to face life with a few paltry hundreds. No wonder he had been obliged to contract debts, to enter into impossibly onerous agreements! Nothing but struggle ahead, a re-

lentless continuation of the past years; and he had reached, passed, his prime!

There, for a day, he had thought himself safe, moving smoothly toward the highest pinnacles; when, without warning, at a few words casually pronounced over an embroidery frame, the entire fabric of his existence had been rent! It was not alone the fact of John Wooddrop's progressive spirit that he faced, but now a rapidly accumulating mass of difficulties. He was dully amazed at the treacherous shifting of life, at the unheralded change of apparently solid ground for quicksand.

XIII

Though the industries centered in Tubal Cain were operated and apparently owned by the Alexander Hulings Iron Company, and Hulings was publicly regarded as their proprietor, in reality his hold on them was hardly more than nominal. At the erection of the furnaces and supplementary forges he had been obliged to grant such rebates to the Columbus Transportation interest in return for capital, he had contracted to supply them at a minimum price such a large proportion of his possible output, that, with continuous shifts, he was barely able to dispose advantageously of a sixth of the year's manufacture.

He had made such agreements confident that he should ultimately control the Wooddrop furnaces; when, doubling his resources, he would soon free himself from conditions imposed on him by an early lack of funds. Now it was at least problematic whether he would ever extend his power to include the older man's domain. His marriage with Gisela had only further separated them, hardening John Wooddrop's resolve that Hulings should never fire a hearth of his, a determination strengthened by the rebuilding of Wooddrop's furnaces for a stone-coal heat.

The widespread land speculation, together with the variability of currency, now began seriously to depress the country, and, more especially, Alexander Hulings. He went to Philadelphia, to Washington, for conferences; but returned to his mansion and Gisela in an increasing somberness of mood. All the expedients suggested, the legalizing of foreign gold and silver, the gradual elimination of the smaller state-bank notes, an extra coinage, one after another failed in their purpose of stabilization; an acute panic was threatened.

Alexander was almost as spare of political comments to his wife as he was of business discussion. That, too, he thought, did not become the female poise. At times, bitter and brief, he condemned the Administration; during dinner he all but startled a servant into dropping a platter by the unexpected violence of a period hurled at the successful attempts to destroy the national bank. And when, as — he declared — a result of that, the state institutions refused specie payment, and a flood of rapidly depreciating

paper struck at the base of commerce, Alexander gloomily informed Gisela that the country was being sold for a barrel of hard cider.

He had, with difficulty, a while before secured what had appeared to be an advantageous order from Virginia; and, after extraordinary effort, he had delivered the iron. But during the lapsing weeks, when the state banks refused to circulate gold, the rate of exchange for paper money fell so far that he lost all his calculated profit, and a quarter of the labor as well. The money of other states depreciated in Pennsylvania a third. In addition to these things Alexander commenced to have trouble with his workmen — wages, too, had diminished, but their hours increased. Hulings, like other commercial operators, issued printed money of his own, good at the company store, useful in the immediate vicinity of Tubal Cain, but valueless at any distance. Cryble, as he had anticipated, recounted the triumph of John Wooddrop.

"The old man can't be beat!" he asserted. "We've got a nice little business here. Tailed on to Wooddrop's, we should do good; but you are running it into an iron wall. You ain't content with enough."

Cryble was apparently unconscious of the dangerous glitter that had come into Hulings' gaze. Alexander listened quietly until the other had finished, and then curtly released him from all connection, any obligation to himself. James Cryble was undisturbed.

"I was thinking myself about a move," he declared. "This concern is pointed bull-headed on to destruction! You're a sort of peacock," he further told Hulings; "you can't do much besides spread and admire your own feathers. But you'll get learned."

Alexander made no reply, and the other shortly after disappeared from his horizon. Cryble, he thought contemptuously, a man of routine, had no more salience than one of the thousands of identical iron pigs run from Glory Furnace. There commenced now a period of toil more bitter, more relentless, than his first experience in the valleys; by constant effort he was able to keep just ahead of the unprofitable labor for the Columbus Railroad. The number of workmen grew constantly smaller, vaguely contaminated by the unsettled period, while his necessity increased. Again and again he longed to strip off his coat and superfluous linen and join the men working the metal in the hearths; he would have felt better if he could have had actual part in rolling and stamping the pig beds, or even in dumping materials into the furnace stack.

In the fever of Alexander Hulings' impatience and concern, the manufacture of his iron seemed to require months between the crude ore and the finished bars and blooms. He detected a growing impotence among laborers, and told them of it with an unsparing, lashing tongue. A general hatred of him again flashed into being; but it was still accompanied by a respect amounting to fear.

He was approached, at a climax of misfortune, by representatives of the

railroad. They sat, their solid faces rimmed in whiskers, and smooth fingers playing with portentous seals, in his office, while one of their number expounded their presence.

"It's only reasonable, Hulings," he stated suavely, "that one man can't stand up against present conditions. Big concerns all along the coast have gone to wreck. You are an exceptional man, one we would be glad to have in our Company; and that, briefly, is what we have come to persuade you to do — to merge your activities here into the railroad; to get on the locomotive with us.

"Long ago you were shrewd enough to see that steam transportation was the coming power; and now — though for the moment we seem overextended — your judgment has been approved. It only remains for you to ratify your perspicacity and definitely join us. We can, I think, offer you something in full keeping with your ability — a vice presidency of the re-organized company and a substantial personal interest."

Alexander attended the speaker half absently, though he realized that probably he had arrived at the crisis of his life, his career; his attention was rapt away by dreams, memories. He saw himself again, saturated with sweat and grime, sitting with Conrad Wishon against the little house where they slept, and planning his empire of iron; he thought again, even further back, of the slough of anguish from which he had won free, and persistently, woven through the entire texture, was his vision of iron and of pride. He had sworn to himself that he would build success from the metal for which he had such a personal affinity; that he would be known as the great Ironmaster of Pennsylvania; and that unsubstantial ideal, tottering now on the edge of calamity, was still more potent, more persuasive, than the concrete and definite promises of safety, prosperity, the implied threat, of the established power before him.

He had an objective comprehension of the peril of his position, his negligible funds and decreasing credit, the men with accounts clamoring for settlement, he thought absurdly of a tessellated floor he had lately laid in his vestibule; the mingled aggression and uncertainty on every hand; but his subjective self rose up and dominated him. Louder than any warning was the cry, the necessity, for the vindication of the triumphant Alexander Hulings, perpetually rising higher. To surrender his iron now, to enter, a mere individual, however elevated, into a corporation, was to confess himself defeated, to tear down all the radiant images from which he had derived his reason for being.

Hulings thought momentarily of Gisela; he had, it might be, no right to involve her blindly in a downfall of the extent that now confronted him. However, he relentlessly repressed this consideration, together with a vague idea of discussing with her their — his — position. His was the judgment, the responsibility, that sustained them; she was only an ornament, the

singer of little airs in the evening; the decoration, in embroidery and gilt flowers, of his table.

He thanked the speaker adequately and firmly voiced his refusal of the offer.

"I am an iron man," he stated in partial explanation; "as that I must sink or swim."

"Iron," another commented dryly, "is not noted for its floating properties."

"I am disappointed, Hulings," the first speaker acknowledged; "yes, and surprised. Of course we are not ignorant of the condition here; and you must also know that the company would like to control your furnaces. We have offered you the palm, and you must be willing to meet the consequences of your refusal. As I said, we'd like to have you too — energetic and capable; for, as the Bible reads, 'He that is not for me ——'"

When they had gone, driving in a local surrey back to the canal, Alexander Hulings secured his hat and, dismissing his carriage, walked slowly down to Tubal Cain Forge. An increasing roar and uprush of sooty smoke and sparks marked the activity within; the water poured dripping under the water wheel, through the channel he had cleared, those long years back, with bleeding hands; strange men stood at the shed opening; but the stream and its banks were exactly as he had first seen them.

His life seemed to have swung in a circle from that former day to now — from dilemma to dilemma. What, after all, did he have, except an increasing weariness of years, that he had lacked then? He thought, with a grim smile, that he might find in his safe nine hundred dollars. All his other possessions suddenly took on an unsubstantial aspect; they were his; they existed; yet they eluded his realization, brought him none of the satisfaction of an object, a fact, solidly grasped.

His name, as he had planned, had grown considerable in men's ears, its murmur rose like an incense to his pride; yet, underneath, it gave him no satisfaction. It gave him no satisfaction because it carried no conviction of security, no personal corroboration of the mere sound.

What, he now saw, he had struggled to establish was a good opinion in his own eyes, that actually he was a strong man; the outer response, upon which he had been intent, was unimportant compared with the other. And in the latter he had not moved forward a step; if he had widened his sphere he had tacitly accepted heavier responsibilities — undischarged. A flicker hammered on a resonant limb, just as it had long ago. How vast, eternal, life was! Conrad Wishon, with his great arched chest and knotted arms, had gone into obliterating earth.

Death was preferable to ruin, to the concerted gibes of little men, the forgetfulness of big; once, looking at his greying countenance in a mirror, he had realized that it would be easier for him to die than fail. Then, with a sudden twisting of his thoughts, his mind rested on Gisela, his wife. He

told himself, with justifiable pride, that she had been content with him; Gisela was not an ordinary woman, she had not married him for a cheap and material reason, and whatever admiration she had had in the beginning he had been able to preserve. Alexander Hulings was certain of that; he saw it in a hundred little acts of her daily living. She thought he was a big man, a successful man; he had not permitted a whisper of his difficulties to fret her serenity, and, by heaven, he thought with a sharp return of his native vigor, she never should hear of them; he would stifle them quietly, alone, one by one.

The idea of death, self-inflicted, a flaccid surrender, receded before the flood of his returning pride, confidence. Age, he felt, had not impaired him; if his importance was now but a shell, he would fill it with the iron of actuality; he would place himself and Gisela for ever beyond the threats of accident and circumstance.

XIV

Gisela had been to Philadelphia, and she was unusually gay, communicative; she was dressed in lavender-and-rose net, with black velvet, and about her throat she wore a sparkling pendant that he had never before noticed.

"I hope you'll like it," she said, fingering the diamonds; "the shape was so graceful that I couldn't resist. And you are so generous, Alexander!"

He was always glad, he told her briefly, to see her in new and fine adornments. He repressed an involuntary grimace at the thought of the probable cost of the ornament. She could hardly have chosen a worse time in which to buy jewels. Not only his own situation, but the whole time, was one for retrenchment. The impulse to tell her this was speedily lost in his pride of her really splendid appearance. He himself had commanded her to purchase whatever she fancied; he had explained that that — the domain of beauty — was exclusively hers; and it was impossible to complain at her first considerable essay.

Here his feeling was rooted in the deepest part of his being — he was, after all, twenty-five years older than Gisela; and, as if in a species of reparation for the discrepancy, he owed her all the luxury possible. This he had promised her — and himself; and an inability to provide gowns and necklaces and gewgaws was a most humiliating confession of failure, a failure unendurable to him on every plane. Alexander, too, had told her finally that she had no place in his affairs of business; and after that he could not very well burden her with the details of a stupid — and momentary — need for economy.

"I got a sweet bouquet holder," she continued; "in chased gold, with garnets. And a new prayer book; you must see that — bound in carved ivory, from Paris." He listened with a stolid face to her recital, vaguely

wondering how much she had spent; how long the jeweler would wait for settlement. " And there was a wonderful Swiss watch I thought of for you; it rang the hours and —— "

" That," he said hastily, " I don't need. I have two excellent watches."

" But you are always complaining! " she returned, mildly surprised. " I didn't get it, but told the man to put it aside. I'll write if you don't want it."

" Do! "

Suddenly he felt weary, a twinge of sciatica shot through his hip; he must keep out of the damp cast houses, with their expanses of wet sand. But actually he was as good as he had ever been; better, for he now saw clearly what he must accomplish, satisfy. The present national crisis would lift; there was already a talk of the resumption of gold payment by the state banks; and the collapse of a firm associated with him in a rolling mill had thrown its control into his hands. Steam power had already been connected, and he could supply the railroad corporation with a certain number of finished rails direct, adding slightly to his profit.

The smallest gain was important, a scrap of wood to keep him temporarily afloat on disturbed waters; he saw before him, close by, solid land. But meantime more than one metaphorical wave swept over his head, leaving him shaken. The Columbus people returned a shipment of iron, with the complaint that it was below the grade useful for their purpose. He inspected the rejected bars with his head forgeman, and they were unable to discover the deficiency.

" That's good puddled iron," the forgeman asserted. " I saw the pig myself, and it could have been wrought on a cold anvil. Do they expect blister steel? "

Alexander Hulings kept to himself the knowledge that this was the beginning of an assault upon his integrity, his name and possessions. At court he could have established the quality of his iron, forced the railroad to accept it within their contract. But he had no money to expend on tedious legal processes; and they knew that in the city.

" We can get a better price for it than theirs," he commented.

The difficulty lay in supplying a stated amount. The forgeman profanely explained something of his troubles with labor:

" I get my own anvils busy, and perhaps the furnaces running out the metal, when the damn charcoal burners lay down. That's the hardest crowd of niggers and drunken Dutch that ever cut wood! It's never a week but one is shot or has his throat cut; and some of the coal they send down looks like pine ash."

At their home he found Gisela with the draperies of the dining room in a silken pile on the carpet.

" I'm tired of this room," she announced; " it's too — too heavy. Those plum-colored curtains almost made me weep. Now what do you think? A white marble mantel in place of that black, and a mirror with wreaths of

colored gilt. An apple green carpet, with pink satin at the windows, draped with India muslin, and gold cords, and Spanish mahogany furniture — that's so much lighter than this." She studied the interior seriously. "Less ormolu and more crystal," Gisela decided.

He said nothing; he had given her the house — it was her world, to do with as she pleased. The decorating of the dining room had cost over three thousand dollars. "And a big Chinese cage, full of finches and rollers." He got a certain grim entertainment from the accumulating details of her planning. Certainly it would be impossible to find anywhere a wife more unconscious of the sordid details of commerce. Gisela was his ideal of elegance and propriety.

Nevertheless, he felt an odd, illogical loneliness fastening on him here, where he had thought to be most completely at ease. His mind, filled with the practical difficulties of tomorrow, rebelled against the restriction placed on it; he wanted to unburden himself of his troubles, to lighten them with discussion, give them the support of another's belief in his ability, his destiny; but, with Cryble gone, and his wife dedicated to purely æsthetic considerations, there was no one to whom he dared confess his growing predicament.

Marriage, he even thought, was something of a failure — burdensome. Gisela, in the exclusive rôle of a finch in an elaborate cage, annoyed him now by her continual chirping song. He thought disparagingly of all women; light creatures fashioned of silks and perfume; extravagant. After supper he went directly into his office room.

There, conversely, he was irritated with the accounts spread perpetually before him, the announcements of fresh failures, depreciated money and bonds. He tramped back and forth across the limited space, longing to share Gisela's tranquillity. In a manner he had been unjust to her; he had seen, noted, other women — his own was vastly superior. Particularly she was truthful, there was no subterfuge, pretense, about her; and she had courage, but, John Wooddrop's daughter, she would have. Alexander Hulings thought of the old man with reluctant admiration; he was strong; though he, Hulings, was stronger. He would, he calculated brutally, last longer; and in the end he would, must, win.

XV

Yet adverse circumstances closed about him like the stone walls of a cell. The slightest error or miscalculation would bring ruin crashing about his pretensions. It was now principally his commanding interest in the rolling mill that kept him going; his forges and furnaces, short of workmen, were steadily losing ground. And, though summer was at an end, Gisela chose this time to divert the labor of a considerable shift to the setting of new masoned flower beds. He watched the operation somberly

from the entrance of the conservatory attached, like a parti-colored fantastic glass bubble, to his house.

" It won't take them over four or five days," Gisela said at his shoulder.

He positively struggled to condemn her foolish waste, but not a word escaped the barrier of his pride. Once started, he would have to explain the entire precarious situation to her — the labor shortage, the dangerous tension of his credit, the inimical powers anxious to absorb his industry, the fact that he was a potential failure. He wished, at any sacrifice, to keep the last from his wife, convinced as she was of his success.

Surely in a few months the sky would clear and he would triumph — this time solidly, beyond all assault. He rehearsed this without his usual conviction; the letters from the Columbus System were growing more dictatorial; he had received a covertly insolent communication from an insignificant tool works.

The Columbus Railroad had written that they were now able to secure a rail, satisfactory for their purpose and tests, at a considerably lower figure than he demanded. This puzzled him; knowing intimately the whole iron situation, he realized that it was impossible for any firm to make a legitimate profit at a smaller price than his. When he learned that the new contracts were being met by John Wooddrop his face was ugly — the older man, at a sacrifice, was deliberately, coldly hastening his downfall. But he abandoned this unpleasant thought when, later, in a circuitous manner, he learned that the Wooddrop Rolling Mills, situated ten miles south of the valleys, were running on a new, secret, and vastly economical system.

He looked up, his brow scored, from his desk. Conrad Wishon's son, a huge bulk, was looking out through a window, completely blocking off the light. Alexander Hulings said:

" I'd give a thousand dollars to know something of that process! "

The second Wishon turned on his heel.

" What's that? " he demanded.

Alexander told him. The other was thoughtful.

" I wouldn't have a chance hereabouts," he pronounced; " but I'm not so well known at the South Mills. Perhaps —— "

Hulings repeated moodily:

" A thousand dollars! "

He was skeptical of Wishon's ability to learn anything of the new milling. It had to do obscurely with the return of the bars through the rollers without having to be constantly re-fed. Such a scheme would cut forty men from the pay books.

A black depression settled over him, as tangible as soot; he felt physically weary, sick. Alexander fingered an accumulation of bills; one, he saw, was from the Philadelphia jeweler — a fresh extravagance of Gisela's.

But glancing hastily at its items, he was puzzled — " Resetting diamond necklace in pendant, fifty-five dollars." It was addressed to Gisela; its presence here, on his desk, was an error. After a momentary, fretful conjecturing he dismissed it from his thoughts; women were beyond comprehension.

He had now, from the sciatica, a permanent limp; a cane had ceased to be merely ornamental. A hundred small details, falling wrongly, rubbed on the raw of his dejection. The feeling of loneliness deepened about him. As the sun sank, throwing up over the world a last dripping bath of red-gold light, he returned slowly to his house. Each window, facing him, flashed in a broad sheet of blinding radiance, a callous illumination. A peacock, another of Gisela's late extravagances, spread a burnished metallic plumage, with a grating cry.

But the hall was pleasantly still, dim. He stood for a long minute, resting, drawing deep breaths of quietude. Every light was lit in the reception room, where he found his wife, seated, in burnt-orange satin and bare powdered shoulders, amid a glitter of glass prisms, gilt and marble. Her very brilliance, her gay, careless smile, added to his fatigue. Suddenly he thought — I am an old man with a young wife! His dejection changed to bitterness. Gisela said:

" I hope you like my dress; it came from Vienna, and was wickedly expensive. Really I ought to wear sapphires with it; I rather think I'll get them. Diamonds look like glass with orange."

Her words were lost in a confused blurring of his mind. He swayed slightly. Suddenly the whole circumstance of his living, of Gisela's babbling, became unendurable. His pride, his conception of a wife set in luxury above the facts of existence, a mere symbol of his importance and wealth, crumbled, stripping him of all pretense. He raised a thin, darkly veined and trembling hand.

" Sapphires! " he cried shrilly. " Why, next week we'll be lucky if we can buy bread! I am practically smashed — smashed at fifty and more. This house that you fix up and fix up, that dress and the diamonds and clocks, and — and —— They are not real; in no time they'll go, fade away like smoke, leave me, us, bare. For five years I have been fighting for my life; and now I'm losing; everything is slipping out of my hands. While you talk of sapphires; you build bedamned gardens with the men I need to keep us alive; and peacocks and —— "

He stopped as abruptly as he had commenced, flooded with shame at the fact that he stood before her self-condemned; that she, Gisela, saw in him a sham. He miserably avoided her gaze, and was surprised when she spoke, in an unperturbed warm voice:

" Sit down, Alexander; you are tired and excited." She rose and, with a steady hand, forced him into a chair. " I am glad that, at last, you told me

this," she continued evenly; " for now we can face it, arrange, together. It can't be so bad as you suppose. Naturally you are worn, but you are a very strong man; I have great faith in you."

He gazed at her in growing wonderment; here was an entirely different woman from the Gisela who had chattered about Viennese gowns. He noted, with a renewed sense of security, the firmness of her lips, her level, unfaltering gaze. He had had an unformulated conviction that in crises women wrung their hands, fainted. She gesticulated toward the elaborate furnishings, including her satin array:

" However it may have seemed, I don't care a bawbee about these things! I never did; and it always annoyed father as it annoyed you. I am sorry, if you like. But at last we understand each other. We can live, fight, intelligently."

Gisela knew; regret, pretense, were useless now, and curiously in that knowledge she seemed to come closer to him; he had a new sense of her actuality. Yet that evening she not only refused to listen to any serious statements, but played and sang the most frothy Italian songs.

XVI

On the day following he felt generally upheld. His old sense of power, of domination, his contempt for petty men and competitions, returned. He determined to go to Pittsburgh himself and study the labor conditions; perhaps secure a fresh, advantageous connection. He was planning the details of this when a man he knew only slightly, by sight, as connected with the coaling, swung unceremoniously into his office.

" Mr. Hulings, sir," he stammered, " Wishon has been shot — killed."

" Impossible! " he ejaculated.

But instantly Alexander Hulings was convinced that it was true. His momentary confidence, vigor, receded before the piling adversities, bent apparently upon his destruction.

" Yes, his body is coming up now. All we know is, a watchman saw him standing at a window of the Wooddrop Mills after hours, and shot him for trespassing — spying on their process."

Alexander's first thought was not of the man just killed, but of old Conrad, longer dead. He had been a faithful, an invaluable, assistant; without him Hulings would never have risen. And now he had been the cause of his son's death! A sharp regret seized him, but he grew rapidly calm before the excitement of the inferior before him.

" Keep this quiet for the moment," he commanded.

" Quiet! " the other cried. " It's already known all over the mountains. Wishon's workmen have quit coaling. They swear they will get Wooddrop's superintendent and hang him."

" Where are they? " Hulings demanded.

The other became sullen, uncommunicative. "We want to pay them for this," he muttered. "No better man lived than Wishon."

Alexander at once told his wife of the accident. She was still surprisingly contained, though pale. "Our men must be controlled," she asserted. "No further horrors!"

Her attitude, he thought, was exactly right; it was neither callous nor hysterical. He was willing to assume the burden of his responsibilities. It was an ugly, a regrettable, occurrence; but men had been killed in his employ before — not a week passed without an accident, and if he lost his head in a welter of sentimentality he might as well shut down at once. Some men lived, struggled upward. It was a primary part of the business of success to keep alive.

Gisela had correctly found the real danger of their position — the thing must go no further. The sky had clouded and a cold rain commenced to fall. He could, however, pay no attention to the weather; he rose from a partial dinner and departed on a score of complicated and difficult errands. But his main concern, to locate and dominate the mobbing charcoal burners, evaded his straining efforts. He caught rumors, echoed threats; once he almost overtook them; yet, with scouts placed, they avoided him.

He sent an urgent message to John Wooddrop, and, uncertain of its delivery, himself drove in search of the other; but Wooddrop was out somewhere in his wide holdings; the superintendent could not be located. A sense of an implacable fatality hung over him; every chance turned against him, mocked the insecurity of his boasted position, deepened the abyss waiting for his suspended fall.

He returned finally, baffled and weary, to his house; yet still tense with the spirit of angry combat. A species of fatalism now enveloped him in the conviction that he had reached the zenith of his misfortunes; if he could survive the present day. . . . A stableman met him at the veranda.

"Mrs. Hulings has gone," the servant told him. "A man came looking for you. It seems they had Wooddrop's manager back in the Mills tract and were going to string him up. But you couldn't be found. Mrs. Hulings, she went to stop it."

An inky cloud floated nauseously before his eyes — not himself alone, but Gisela, dragged into the dark whirlpool gathered about his destiny! He was momentarily stunned, with twitching hands and a riven, haggard face, remembering the sodden brutality of the men he had seen in the smoke of charring, isolated stacks; and then a sharp energy seized him.

"How long back?" Hulings demanded.

"An hour or more, perhaps a couple."

Alexander raged at the mischance that had sent Gisela on such an errand. Nothing, he felt, with Wooddrop's manager secured, would halt the charcoal burners' revenge of Wishon's death. The rain now beat down in a heavy diagonal pour, and twilight was gathering.

"We must go at once for Mrs. Hulings," he said. Then he saw Gisela approaching, accompanied by a small knot of men. She walked directly up to him, her crinoline soggy with rain, her hair plastered on her brow; but her deathly pallor drove everything else from his observation. She shuddered slowly, her skirt dripping ceaselessly about her on the sod.

"I was too late!" she said in a dull voice. "They had done it!" She covered her eyes, moved back from the men beside her, from him. "Swinging a little . . . all alone! So sudden — there, before me!" A violent shivering seized her.

"Come," Alexander Hulings said hoarsely; "you must get out of the wet. Warm things. Immediately!"

He called imperatively for Gisela's maid, and together they assisted her up to her room. Above, Gisela had a long, violent chill; and he sent a wagon for the doctor at Harmony.

The doctor arrived, and mounted the stairs; but, half an hour later, he would say little. Alexander Hulings commanded him to remain in the house. The lines deepened momentarily on the former's countenance; he saw himself unexpectedly in a shadowy pier glass, and stood for a long while subconsciously surveying the lean, grizzled countenance that followed his gaze out of the immaterial depths. "Alexander Hulings," he said aloud, in a tormented mockery; "the master of — of life!"

He was busy with the local marshal when the doctor summoned him from the office.

"Your wife," the other curtly informed him, "has developed pneumonia."

Hulings steadied himself with a hand against a wall.

"Pneumonia!" he repeated, to no one in particular. "Send again for John Wooddrop."

He was seated, a narrow, rigid figure, waiting for the older man, in the midst of gorgeous upholstery. Two facts hammered with equal persistence on his numbed brain: one that all his projects, his dream of power, of iron, now approached ruin, and the other that Gisela had pneumonia. It was a dreadful thing that she had come on in the Mills tract! The Columbus System must triumphantly absorb all that he had, that he was to be. Gisela had been chilled to the bone; pneumonia! It became difficult and then impossible to distinguish one from the other — Gisela and the iron were inexplicably welded in the poised catastrophe of his ambition.

Alexander Hulings rose, his thin lips pinched, his eyes mere sparks, his body tense, as if he were confronting the embodied force that had checked him. He stood upright, so still that he might have been cast in the metal that had formed his vision of power, holding an unquailing mien. His inextinguishable pride cloaked him in a final contempt for all that life, that fate, might do. Then his rigidity was assaulted by John Wooddrop's heavy and hurried entrance into the room.

Hulings briefly repeated the doctor's pronouncement. Wooddrop's face was darkly pouched, his unremoved hat a mere wet film, and he left muddy exact footprints wherever he stepped on the velvet carpet.

" By heaven! " he quavered, his arms upraised. " If between us we have killed her —— " His voice abruptly expired.

As Alexander Hulings watched him the old man's countenance grew livid, his jaw dropped; he was at the point of falling. He gasped, his hands beating the air; then the unnatural color receded, words became distinguishable: " Gisela! . . . Never be forgiven! Hellish! " It was as if Death had touched John Wooddrop on the shoulder, dragging a scarifying hand across his face, and then briefly, capriciously, withdrawn.

" Hulings! Hulings," he articulated, sinking weakly on a chair, " we must save her. And, anyhow, God knows we were blind! " He peered out of suffused rheumy eyes at Alexander, appalling in his sudden disintegration under shock and the weight of his years. " I'm done! " he said tremulously. " And there's a good bit to see to — patent lawyer tomorrow, and English shipments. Swore I'd keep you from it." He held out a hand, " But there's Gisela, brought down between us now, and — and iron's colder than a daughter, a wife. We'd best cover up the past quick as we can! "

At the instant of grasping John Wooddrop's hand Alexander Hulings' inchoate emotion shifted to a vast realization, blotting out all else from his mind. In the control of the immense Wooddrop resources he was beyond, above, all competition, all danger. What he had fought for, persistently dreamed, had at last come about — he was the greatest Ironmaster of the state!

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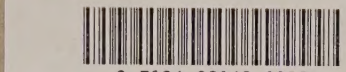

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